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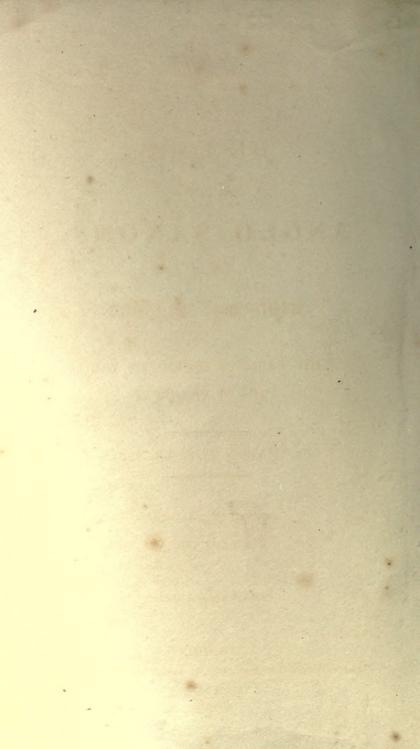
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HISTORY

OF THE

ANGLO-SAXONS:

COMPRISING THE

history of England

FROM

THE EARLIEST PERIOD TO THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

By SHARON TURNER, F.A.S.

VOL. III.

THE THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1820.

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By SHARON TURNER, F. S.S.

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THE

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BOOK VII.

OF THE MANNERS OF THE ANGLO-SAXONS AFTER THEIR OCCUPATION OF ENGLAND.

CHAP. I.

On their Infancy, Childhood, and Names.

In the Appendix to the first volume of this CHAP. history, we have described the Saxons as they were on the Continent, before they possessed themselves of the south part of Britain, during the fifth and sixth centuries; and we may remark, that the human character has seldom displayed qualities more inauspicious to the improvement of intellect or of moral character. When they first landed, they were bands of fierce, ignorant, idolatrous, and superstitious pirates, enthusiastically courageous, but habitually

B

BOOK cruel. Yet from such ancestors a nation has, in the course of twelve centuries, been formed, which, inferior to none in every moral and intellectual merit, is superior to every other in the love and possession of useful liberty: a nation which cultivates with equal success the elegancies of art, the ingenious labours of industry, the energies of war, the researches of science, and the richest productions of genius.

> This improved state has been slowly attained under the discipline of very diversified events. The first gradation of the happy progress was effected during that period, which it is the object of this work to elucidate.

> THE destruction of the Roman Empire of the West by the German nations has been usually lamented as a barbarization of the human mind; a period of misery, darkness, and ruin; as a replunging of society into the savage chaos from which it had so slowly escaped, and from which, through increased evils and obstacles, it had again to emerge. This view of the political and moral phenomena of this remarkable epoch is not correct. It suits neither the true incidents that preceded or accompanied, nor those which followed this mighty revolution. And our notions of the course of human affairs have been made more confused and unscientific by this exaggerated declamation, and by the inaccurate perceptions which has occasioned it.

> THE conquest and partition of the Western Roman Empire by the Nomadic nations of Ger-

many was, in fact, a new and beneficial re-casting CHAP. of human society in all its classes, functions, manners, and pursuits. The civilisation of mankind had been carried in the previous Roman world to the fullest extent to which the then existing means of human improvement could be urged. That this had long been stationary, and for some time retrograding, the philosophical examiner into the government, literature, religion, public habits, and private morals of the Roman Empire, will, if he make his researches sufficiently minute and extensive, be satisfactorily convinced. Hence, either the progress of mankind must have been stopped, and their corrupting civilisation have stagnated or feebly rolled on towards its own barbarization, or some extensive revolution must have broken up the existing system of universal degeneracy, and began a new career of moral agency and social melioration. The fact is incontestible that this latter state has been the result of the irruptions and established kingdoms of the Teutonic tribes; and this visible consequence of their great movement should terminate our dark and querulous descriptions of this momentous period, which suit rather the age and mind of a doleful Gildas than of an enlightened student of history of the nineteenth century.

That the invasions of the Roman Empire by the warlike tribes of the North was attended with great sufferings to mankind at the time of their occurrence is strictly true; but these calamities

BOOK were not greater than those which all the wars of the ancient world had produced to almost every people in whose territory they had been waged. The hostilities of Rome against Carthage, against Gaul under Cæsar, and against Germany from the time of Drusus to the days of Stilicho, not to mention many others, had been as fatal to the Carthaginians, Gauls, and Germans, as those of the fierce invaders of the fourth and fifth centuries were to the then population of the debased Western Empire. The destruction of human life and comfort in the regions attacked were the same when the Romans invaded the barbarians, as when the latter retaliated their aggressions. War itself must cease from the increasing wisdom and virtue of mankind before such calamities will disappear; but it is consolatory to human reason to observe, that, while the moral imperfections of the world operate to continue it, a benevolent order of things compels even its mischiefs to produce good; and, if this view of such periods be not taken, we shall never attain the discernment of the true philosophy of the moral government of the world.

THAT the settlements of the German kingdoms in the Roman Empire were not so calamitous to the world as so many have supposed is most forcibly implied by the intimations, before mentioned, from Salvian, that many Romans emigrated from their parental empire to place themselves under the barbaric governments that

they might escape the oppressions of the Roman CHAP. collectors of the Imperial taxations. The barbaric establishments were a new order of things in Europe, but cannot have been so prolific of misery to mankind as we have hitherto too gratuitously assumed, when, notwithstanding the discouragement of new languages and institutions, and ruder habits, they were preferred by many to the country which was their birthplace, which had been so long consecrated by deserved fame, and whose feelings, mind, and social manners, were congenial to their own.

THE invasions of the German nations destroyed the ancient governments, and political and legal systems of the Roman Empire in the provinces in which they established themselves; and dispossessed the former proprietors of their territorial property. A new set of land-owners was diffused over every country, with new forms of government, new principles, and new laws; new religious disciplines and hierarchies, with many new tenets and practices. A new literature, and new manners, all productive of great improvements, in every part superseded the old, and gave to Europe a new face, and to every class of society a new life and spirit. In the Anglo-Saxon settlements in Britain we see all these effects displayed with the most beneficial consequences; and proceed to delineate them as clearly as the distance of time, and the imperfections of our remaining documents, will permit us to discern them.

BOOK THE Anglo-Saxons must have been materially improved in their manners and mental associations by the civilisation to which Britain had attained at the time of their invasion, from the Roman government and intercourse, and which has been alluded to in the former part of this work.

> THE first great change in the Anglo-Saxons appeared in the discontinuance of their piracies. They ceased to be the ferocious spoilers of the ocean and its coasts; they became land-owners, agriculturists, and industrious citizens; they seized and divided the acquisitions of British affluence, and made the commonalty of the island their slaves. Their war-leaders became territorial chiefs; and the conflicts of capricious and sanguinary robbery were exchanged for the possession and inheritance of property in its various sorts; for trades and manufactures, for useful luxuries, peaceful industry, and domestic comfort.

WE will proceed to consider them as they displayed their manners and customs during their occupation of England, and before the Norman conquest introduced new institutions.

THEIR tenderest and most helpless years were under the care of females. The gratitude of Edgar to his nurse appears, from his rewarding with grants of land the noble lady, wife of an ealdorman, who had nursed and educated him with maternal attention. This was not un-

Hist. Rames. 3 Gale, x. Script. 387. 405.

usual: Ethelstan, an Anglo-Saxon ætheling, CHAP. says, in his will, "I give to Alfswythe, my foster-mother, for her great deservingness, the lands at Wertune, that I bought of my father for two hundred and fifty mancusa of gold by weight."2

THEY had infant baptism: hence the Saxon homily says, "though the cild for youth may not speak when men baptize it." 3 They were enjoined to baptize their children within thirty days after birth. 4 They baptized by immersion; for when Ethelred was plunged in, the royal infant disgraced himself. They used the 5 cradle. It is mentioned in the laws, of a person of the dignity of a gesithcund man, that when he travelled he might have with him his gerefas, his smith, and his child's nurse. 6 Kings sometimes stood as godfathers, and their laws so venerated this relationship as to establish peculiar provisions to punish the man who slew another's godson or godfather.7 On the death of the father, the children were ordered to remain under the care of the mother, who was to provide them with sustenance; for this she was to be allowed six shillings, a cow in summer, and an ox in winter; but his relations were to occupy the frum-stol, the head seat, until the boy became of age. 8

² Sax. Dict. App. 3 Wanley, Catal. Sax. p. 196.

⁴ Wilkins, Leg. Anglo-Sax. p. 14.

⁵ Tha cilo the læz on tham cpabele, ibid, p. 145.

⁶ Wilkins, p. 25. ⁷ Ibid. p. 26. ⁸ Ibid. p. 20.

BOOK VII. The Northmen were in the habit of exposing their children. The Anglo-Saxons seem not to have been unacquainted with this inhumanity; as one of the laws of Ina provides, that for the fostering of a foundling six shillings should be allowed the first year, twelve the next, thirty the third, and afterwards according to his wlite, or his personal appearance and beauty.

Bede mentions, that their period of infancy ended with the seventh year, and that the first year of their childhood began with the 'eighth. In the early stage, he exhibits the person of whom he speaks as amusing himself with his play-fellows in the tricks and sports of his age, but as excelling in his dexterity, and in his power of pursuing them without fatigue." It is hardly worth a line to remark, that the Anglo-Saxon child must have resembled every other: restless activity without an object, sport without reasoning, grief without impression, and caprice without affectation, are the usual characteristics of our earliest years in every age and climate.

As the Anglo-Saxons were not a literary people, it is natural that their childish occupations should be the exercises of muscular agility. Leaping, running, wrestling, and every contention and contortion of limb which love of play or emulation could excite, were their favourite sports. Bede describes his hero as

⁹ Wilkins, p. 19.

¹⁰ Bede Vit. Cuthb. c. i. p. 229.

Bede, ibid.

boasting of his superior dexterity, and as joining CHAP. wrestlings in a field, where, as usual, he says, they writhed their limbs in various but unnatural flexures, 12

with no small crowd of boys in their accustomed . I.

THE names of the Anglo-Saxons were imposed, as with us, in their infancy, by their parents. In several charters it is mentioned, that the persons therein alluded to had been called from their cradles by the names expressed, and which they had received, "not from accident, but from the will of "their parents." 13

THEIR names seem to have been frequently compound words, rather expressive of caprice than of appropriate meaning. The appellation of Mucil, "large," which Alfred's wife's father bore 14, may have been suggested by the size of the new-born infant; as hwithyse, "the white boy," or Egbert, "bright eye," might have been imposed from some peculiar appearance. But the following names, when considered as applied first in infancy, appear to be as fantastic, and as much the effusions of vanity, as the lofty names so dear to modern parents:

> Æthelwulf, the noble wolf. Berhtwulf, the illustrious wolf. Eadwulf. the prosperous wolf.

Ealdwulf, the old wolf.

Æthelwyn, noble in battle, or the noble joy.

[&]quot; Bede Vit. Cuthb. c.i. p. 230.

¹³ MS. Claud. B. vi. p. 34. et 62, &c.

¹⁴ Asser, p. 19.

BOOK VII.

Eadric. happy and rich. Ælfred. an elf in council. Hundberht. the illustrious hound. Heardberht. the illustrious protector. Æthelheard. the noble protector. Sigered, victorious counsel. Sigeric, victorious and rich. Æthelred, noble in council. Eadmund. the prosperous patron. Eadwin. prosperous in battle. Ælfheag, tall as an elf. the mountain-stone. Dunstan, Æthelbald, noble and bold. Wulfrie. powerful as a wolf. Eadward. the prosperous guardian. the poble rock. Ethelstan, noble and illustrious. Ethelbert.

Or the female names, the meaning is more applicable, and sometimes displays better taste. We give the following as specimens, taken as they occurred:

Æthelswytha. Selethrytha, Editha. Elfhild. Beage, Ethelfritha, Adeleve. Eadburh. Heaburge, Eadfled. Adelfleda. Ælfgiva, Eadgifa, Æthelgifa, Wynfreda, Æthelhild. Ælfthrythe,

very noble. a good threatener. the blessed gift. the elf of battle. the bracelet. noble and powerful. the noble wife. the happy pledge. tall as a castle. the happy pregnancy. the noble pregnancy. the elf favor. the happy gift. the noble gift. the peace of man. the noble war goddess. threatening as an elf.

WE will subjoin a few specimens of the names CHAP. prevailing in the same families:

A father and three daughters:

Dudda, ... the family stem.

Deorwyn, dear to man, or the precious joy.

Deorswythe, very dear. Golde, golden. 25

A father and his four sons:

Æthelwyn, the noble joy.
Æthelwold, the noble governor.

Alfwold, the ruling elf.
Athelsin, always noble.

Æthelwyn.

A brother and two sisters:

Leonric, the lion of the kingdom.

Adelficd.

Adeleve, the noble wife.

A husband, wife, and daughter:

Ridda, the horseman. Bugcga, nimble as a hind.

Heaburge.

To which we may add,

Ethelwulph and his four sons:

Ethelbald, Ethelbert, Ethelred, Alfred.

¹⁵ The state of this family is thus mentioned in a Saxon MS. "Dudda was a husbandman in Hæthfelda; and he had three daughters: one was called Deorwyn; the other Deorswythe; and the third Golde. Wullaf, in Hæthfelda, hath Deorwyn for his wife; and Ælfstan, at Kingawyrth, hath Deorwythe; and Ealhstan, the brother of Ælfstan, married Golde." Cott, MS. Tib. B. 5.

BOOK IT has been a subject of discussion, whether the Anglo-Saxons used surnames. There can be no question that many were distinguished by appellations added to their original, or Christian names. Thus we find a person called Wulfsic se blaca, or the pale; Thurceles hwitan, or the white; others Æthelwerde Stameran, and Godwine Dreflan. Sometimes a person is designated from his habitation, as Ælfric at Bertune; Leonmære at Biggrafan. Very often the addition expresses the name of his father, as Ælfgare Ælfan suna, Ælmær Ælfrices suna, Sired Ælfrides suna, Godwine Wolfnothes suna, or more shortly Wulfrig Madding; Badenoth Beotting. The office, trade, affinity, or possession, is frequently applied to distinguish the individuals mentioned in the charters: as Leofwine Ealdorman, Sweigen Scyldwirtha, Eadwig his mæg, Ægelpig munuc, Osword preost, Leowine se Canon, Heording gerefa, and such like. 16 But although it is certain that such additional appellations were occasionally used by the Anglo-Saxons, yet they appear to have been but personal distinctions, and not to have been appropriated by them as family names, in the manner of surnames with us. In the progress of civilisation, the convenience of a permanent family denomination was so generally felt as to occasion the adoption of the custom. It is probable that

¹⁶ See Hickes's Dissert. Epist. p. 22-25.

the first permanent surnames were the appell- CHAP. ations of the places of birth, or residence, or a favourite ancestor. To these the caprice of individual choice or popular fancy, the hereditary pursuit of peculiar trades, and the continued possession of certain offices, added many others, especially in towns. But this custom of appropriating a permanent appellation to particular families, became established in the period which succeeded the Norman conquest. 17

The power of the Anglo-Saxon parent over his child was limited, or at least the clergy, as soon as Christianity was introduced, began to confine it. Theodore, the second archbishop of Canterbury, in 668, allowed that a father, if compelled by necessity, might deliver up his son to a state of servitude, that is, slavery, without the child's consent. But he declared that a boy of fifteen might make himself a monk, and a

¹⁷ And yet one Saxon MS. seems to express an actual surname, Hatte. Thus, "Hwita Hatte was a keeper of bees in Hæthfelda; and Tate Hatte, his daughter, was the mother of Wulfsige, the shooter; and Lulle Hatte, the sister of Wulfsige, Hehstan had for his wife in Wealadene. Wifus, and Dunne, and Seoloce were born in Hæthfelda.

[&]quot;Duding Hatte, the son of Wifus, is settled at Wealadene; and Ceolmund Hatte, the son of Dunne, is also settled there; and Ætheleah Hatte, the son of Seoloce is also there; and Tate Hatte, the sister of Cenwald, Mæg hath for his wife at Weligan; and Ealdelm, the son of Herethrythe, married the daughter of Tate. Werlaf Hatte, the father of Werstan, was the rightful possessor of Hæthfelda," &c. Cott. MS. Tib. B. 6.— The above is a literal translation.

girl of sixteen or seventeen might choose a religious life. Up to the age of fifteen the father might marry his daughter as he pleased; but after fifteen he was forbidden to dispose of her against her will. 18

¹⁸ Cæpitula Theodore ap. D'Acheri Spicel. vol. i. p. 489.



CHAP, II.

Their Education.

WE cannot detail the particular course of education by which the Anglo-Saxons conducted their children to maturity, but some information may be gleaned. Their society was divided into two orders of men, laymen and ecclesiastics. Among the latter as much provision was made for intellectual improvement as the general darkness of the period would allow. The laity were more contented with ignorance; and neglecting the mind, of whose powers and nature they knew nothing, they laboured to increase the hardihood and agility of the body, and the intrepidity, perhaps the fierceness, of the spirit.

Some men, rising above the level of their age, endeavoured to recommend the use of schools. Thus Sigebert, in the seventh century, having enlarged his mind during his exile in France, as soon as he regained the East Anglian throne, established a school in his dominions for youth to be instructed in learning. So we find in Alfred's time, and under his improving auspices,

BOOK most of the noble, and many of the inferior orders, were put under the care of masters, with whom they learnt both Latin and Saxon books, and also writing, that "before they cultivated the arts adapted to manly strength, like hunting, and such others as suited the noble, they might make themselves acquainted with liberal knowledge." Hence Edward and Ælfthrythe are stated by Asser to have studiously learnt Psalms and Saxon books, and chiefly Saxon 'poetry. But among the laity, these were transient gleams of intellectual sunshine, neither general nor permanent. The great and powerful undervalued knowledge; hence Alfred's brothers did not offer to attain the faculty of reading which he was tempted to acquire. 3 Hence, even kings state in their charters, that they signed with the cross, because they were unable to write 4; and hence so many of Alfred's earls, gerefas, and thegns, who had been illiterate all their lives, were compelled by his wise severity to learn in their mature age, that they might not discharge their duties with such shameful insufficiency. It is mentioned on this occasion, that those who from age or want of capacity could not learn to read themselves, were obliged to have their son, kinsman, or, if they had none, one of their servants taught, that they might at

Asser. We we as water a Asser.

⁴ In a MS. charter of Wihtred, in the possession of the late Mr. Astle, to the king's mark was added, "ad cujus confirmationem pro ignoranția literarum."

least be read to, and be rescued from the total CHAP. ignorance with which they had so long been satisfied. Asser expresses the great lamentations of these well-born, but untaught men, that they had not studied such things in their 'youth. Nothing can more strongly display the general want of even that degree of education which our poorest charity-children receive, than these circumstances.

THE clergy were the preceptors of those who sought to learn; and though Alfred tells us how few even of these could read, yet our history of the Anglo-Saxon literature will show some very brilliant exceptions. Such as they were, however, to them the moral and intellectual education of the age was entrusted. Thus Aldhelm's father, a prince, put him under the tuition of the Abbot Adrian. Thus the Irish monk Maildulf, who settled at Malmsbury, and was well skilled in Greek and Latin, took scholars to earn subsistence. 7 From a passage in the biographer of Wilfrid, we learn that children, who afterwards pursued the paths of ambition, received, in the first part of their lives, instruction from ecclesiastics. He says of Wilfrid, a bishop in the eighth century, " Princes and noblemen sent their children to him to be brought up, that they might be dedicated to God if they should choose it; or that, when

⁵ Asser.

⁶ Malmsb. 3 Gale, 398.

BOOK full grown, he might present them in armour to the king, if they preferred it." 8

> WHEN they reached the age of fourteen, the aspiring, or the better conditioned, prepared themselves for arms. It was after completing his thirteenth year that Wilfrid, who had not then decided on a religious life, began to think of quitting the paternal roof. He obtained such arms, horses, and garments for himself and his boys, as were necessary to enable him to present himself to the royal notice. With these he travelled till he reached the queen of the province. He met there some of the nobles at her court. whom he had attended at his father's house. They praised him, and introduced him to the queen, by whom he was graciously received. As he afterwards chose the path of devotion, she recommended him to one of the nobles who accompanied the king, but who was induced, by the pressure of a paralytic disease, to exchange the court for the cloister.9

> THE Anglo-Saxons distinguished the period between childhood and manhood by the term cnihthade, knighthood. It is stated in Ina's laws, "that a cniht of ten winters old might give evidence 10;" and Bede's expression, of a boy about eight years old, is translated by Alfred, " pær eahta pintpa enith." A king also mentions of a circumstance, that he saw it cniht

^{*} Eddius, p. 62. 9 Ibid. p. 44.

Wilkins, Leg. p. 16.

Bede, lib. v. c. 18. Alf. Transl. 635.

wesende, being a cniht, or while a boy. 12 It will be considered in another place how far the term bore the meaning of chivalry among the Anglo-Saxons. A daughter was under the power of her parents till the age of thirteen or fourteen, when she had the disposal of her person herself; at fifteen, a son had the right of choosing his path of life, and might then become a monk, but not before. 13

In this season of cnihthood, or youth, we find them striving to excel each other at a horse-race. A person in Bede describes himself as one of a party, who on their journey came to a spacious plain, adapted to a horse-course. The young men were desirous to prove their horses in the greater course, or, as the Saxon translator expresses it, that we might run and try which had the swiftest horse. The individual spoken of at last joined them, but his animated horse, attempting to clear a concavity in the way, by a violent leap, the youth was thrown senseless against a stone, and with difficulty brought to life. 14

THE Saxon youth seem to have been accustomed to habits of docility and obedience. The word cniht was also used to express a 's servant; and Wilfrid is characterised as having in his youth attentively ministered to all his father's

¹³ Bede. Alf. Transl. p. 518.

^{13 1} Wilk. Concil. 130.

¹⁴ Bede, lib. v. c. 6.

¹⁵ Gen. c. xxiv. v. 65. Luke, xii. v. 45.

BOOK visitors, whether royal attendants or their ser-

The education of the Saxons was much assisted by the emigrations or visits of Irish ecclesiastics. We have mentioned Maildulf at Malmsbury; it is also intimated, in Dunstan's life, that some Irishmen had settled at Glastonbury, whose books Dunstan diligently studied. This great, but ambitious man, was arraigned in his youth for studying the vain songs of his Pagan ancestors, and the frivolous charms of histories.¹⁷

AFTER the prevalence of Christianity, a portion of the youth was taken into the monasteries. We have a description, in Saxon, of the employment of the boys there. One of these, in answer to the question, 'What have you done to-day?' says,

"Many things; when I heard the knell, I arose from my bed and went to church, and sang the song for before-day with the brethren, and afterwards of All Saints, and, at the dawn of day, the song of praise. After these I said the first and seventh Psalms, with the litany and first mass. Afterwards, before noon, we did the mass for the day, and after this at mid-day, we sang, and eat, and drank, and slept, and again we rose and sang the noon, and now we are here before thee ready to hear what thou shalt say to us."

THE interrogation proceeds:

'When will ye sing the evening or the night song?'
"When it is time."—'Wert thou flogged to-day?'
"No."—'No?' "Every one knows whether he has been flogged to-day or not."—'Where do you sleep?' "In

¹⁶ Eddius, p. 44.

¹⁷ MS. Cleop. B. 13.

the sleeping room with the brethren." - 'Who rouses you CHAP. to the song before day?' "Sometimes I hear the knell and rise; sometimes my master wakes me, sternly, with his rod."

On being questioned why they learnt so industriously, he is made to reply,

" Because we would not be like the stupid animals, who know nothing but their grass and water." 18

THAT they used personal castigation in their education is frequently intimated. 19 Alcuin, in the preface to his Dialectica, adds a warm exhortation to his young contemporaries to improve themselves by education. "O ye, who enjoy the youthful age, so fitted for your lessons! Learn. Be docile. Lose not the day in idle things. The passing hour, like the wave, never returns again. Let your early years flourish with the study of the virtues, that your age may shine with great honours. Use these happy days. Learn, while young, the art of eloquence, that you may be a safeguard and defender of those whom you value. Acquire the conduct and manners so beautiful in youth, and your name will become celebrated through the world.

^{*8} MS. Tib. A. 3.

¹⁹ Thus Alcuin: - " As scourges teach children to learn the ornament of wisdom, and to accustom themselves to good manners." p. 1631. He says to the brethren of York Minster, where he was educated: "You cherished the weak mind of my infancy with maternal affection. You sustained my wanton day of childhood with pious patience. You brought me to the perfect age of manhood by the disciplines of paternal castigation, and confirmed my mind by the erudition of sacred instruction." p. 1627.

CHAP. III.

Their Food.

THEIR food was that mixture of animal and vegetable diet which always attends the progress of civilisation. They reared various sorts of corn in inclosed and cultivated lands, and they fed domesticated cattle for the uses of their table.

For their animal food they had oxen, sheep, and great abundance of swine; they used likewise, fowls, deer, goats, and hares; but though the horned cattle are not unfrequently mentioned in their grants and wills, and were often the subjects of exchange, yet the animals most numerously stated are the swine. The country in all parts abounded with wood; and woods are not often particularised without some notice of the swine which they contained, or were capable of maintaining. They also frequently appear in wills. Thus Alfred, a nobleman, gives to his relations an hide of land with one hundred swine; and he directs one hundred swine to be given for his soul to one minster, and the same number to another; and to his two daughters he gives two thousand 'swine.

Will. in App. Sax. Dict.

So Elfhelm gives land to St. Peter's at West-CHAP. minster, on the express condition that they feed two hundred of these animals for his wife. 2

THEY eat various kinds of fish: but, of this description of their animal food, the species which is most profusely noticed is the eel. They used eels as abundantly as swine. Two grants are mentioned, each yielding one thousand eels 3, and by another two thousand were received as an annual rent. Four thousand eels were a yearly present from the monks of Ramsay to those of Peterborough. 4 We read of two places purchased for twenty-one pounds, wherein sixteen thousand of these fish were 5 caught every year; and, in one charta, twenty fishermen are stated, who furnished, during the same period, sixty thousand eels to the 6 monastery. Eel dikes are often mentioned in the boundaries of their lands.

In the dialogues composed by Elfric to instruct the Anglo-Saxon youths in the Latin language, which are yet preserved to us 7, we have some curious information concerning the manners and trades of our ancestors. In one colloquy the fisherman is asked, 'What gettest thou by thine art?' "Big loaves, clothing, and money."—' How do you take them?' "I ascend my ship, and cast my net into the river;

² 1 Will. in App. Sax. Dict.

^{3 3} Gale, 477.

^{4 3} Gale, 456.

⁵ Dugdale Mon. p. 244.

⁵ Dugdale Mon. p. 235.

⁷ In the Cotton Library, MS. Tib. A.3.

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⁷ In the Cotton Library, MS. Tib. A. 3.

BOOK I also throw in a hook, a bait, and a rod."-VII. , 'Suppose the fishes are unclean?' "I throw the unclean out, and take the clean for food."-Where do you sell your fish?" "In the city."-'Who buys them?' "The citizens; I cannot take so many as I can sell."- What fishes do you take?' "Eels, haddocks, minnies, and eelpouts, skate, and lampreys 8, and whatever swims in the river."— Why do you not fish in the sea? "Sometimes I do; but rarely, because a great ship is necessary there."— What do you take in the sea?' "Herrings and salmons, porpoises, sturgeons, oysters, and crabs, muscles, winckles, cockles, flounders, plaice, lobsters 9, and such like."- 'Can you take a whale?' "No, it is dangerous to take a whale; it is safer for me to go to the river with my ship than to go with many ships to hunt whales." - "Why?" "Because it is more pleasant to me to take fish which I can kill with one blow; yet many take whales without danger, and then they get a great price, but, I dare not, from the fearfulness of my mind."

This extract shows the uniformity of human taste on the main articles of food. Fish was such a favourite diet, that the supply never equalled the demand, and the same fishes were

The Saxon names for these are, ælar, hacobar, mýnar, 7 æleputan, rceotan, 7 lamppesan. MS. Tib. A. 3.

⁹ pepinczar j leaxar, menerpyn j reiman, orchean j cpabban, murlan, pine pinclan, ræ coccar, raze, rloc, lopýrenan. MS. ib.

then in request which we select, though our taste has declined for the porpoises. The porpoise is mentioned in a convention between an archbishop and the clergy at Bath, which enumerates six of them under the name of mereswine, or the sea-swine, and thirty thousand herrings. 10

In the earlier periods of the Anglo-Saxon colonisation, their use of fish was more limited; for we read in Bede, that Wilfrid rescued the people of Sussex from famine in the eighth century by teaching them to catch fish: "For though the sea and their rivers abounded with fish, they had no more skill in the art than to take eels. The servants of Wilfrid threw into the sea nets made out of those by which they had obtained eels, and thus directed them to a a new source of plenty." It may account for Wilfrid's superior knowledge, to remark, that he had travelled over the continent to Rome.

It is an article in the Penitentiale of Egbert, that fish might be bought though dead. The same treatise allows herrings to be eaten, and states, that when boiled they are salutary in fever and diarrhoea, and that their gall mixed with pepper is good for a sore mouth! 13

Horse-flesh, which our delicacy rejects with aversion, appears to have been used, though it

¹⁰ MS. CCC. apud Cantab. Miscell. G. p. 73.

¹¹ Bede, lib. iv. c. 13.

¹ Wilkins Conc. p. 123.

¹³ Ibid.

BOOK became unfashionable as their civilisation advanced. The Penitentiale says, "Horse-flesh is not prohibited, though many families will not buy it." 14 But in the council held in 785, in Northumbria, before Alfwold, and in Mercia. before Offa, it was discountenanced. "Many among you eat horses, which is not done by any Christians in the East. Avoid this." 15

> But though animal food was in much use among our ancestors, it was, as it is with us, and perhaps will be in every country in which agriculture has become habitual, and population much increased, rather the food of the wealthier part of the community than of the lower orders.

> THAT it could not be afforded by all is clear, from the incident of a king and queen visiting a monastery, and enquiring, when they saw the boys eating only bread, if they were allowed nothing else. The answer returned was, that the scanty means of the society could afford no better. The queen then petitioned the king to enable them to provide additional food. 16

> THEY had wheat and barley in general use. but their prices were different; wheat, like meat, was a dearer article, and therefore less universal. It is said of the abbey of St. Edmund, that the young monks eat barley-bread because the income of the establishment would not admit of their feeding twice or thrice a-day on wheaten

^{14 1} Wilkins Conc. p. 123. 15 Ibid. p. 151.

⁴⁶ MS. Cotton. Claud. C. 9. p. 128.

bread. Their corn was thrashed with a flail CHAP. like our own, and ground by the simple mechanism of mills, of which great numbers are particularised in the Doomsday Survey. In their most ancient law, we read of a king's grinding servant 18; but both water-mills and wind-mills occur very frequently in their conveyances after that time.

They used warm bread. 19 The life of St. Neot states, that the peasant's wife placed on her oven "the loaves which some call 20 loudas." In the agreement of one of their social gilds, a broad loaf well besewon and well gesyfled is noticed.21 In one grant of land we find six hundred loaves reserved as a rent 22, and oftentimes cheeses. They were allowed to use milk, cheese, and eggs, on their fast-days.33 Some individual devotees chose to be very rigorous. In 735, a lady is mentioned, in Oxford, of a noble family, who mortified herself by lying on the bare ground, and subsisting on broth made of the poorest herbs, and on a small quantity of barley-bread. 24 In the same century, Boniface, the Anglo-Saxon missionary, complained of some priests, that they did not eat of the meats which

³⁷ Dugd. Mon. p. 296. ³⁸ Wilkins's Leg. Sax. p. 2.

¹⁹ Bede, ed. Smith, p. 234.

³⁰ MS. Cott. Claud. A. 5. p. 157.

³¹ Dugd. Mon. p. 278.

²² Sax. Chron. 75.

²³ Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 194.

²⁴ Dugd. Mon. 173.

BOOK God had given, and that others fed on milk and honey, rejecting animal food. 25

Abstinence too rigorous was not, however, a general fault of the Anglo-Saxon monks. On the contrary, whenever the interior of a well-endowed monastery is opened to our view, we meet with an abundance which precluded mortification. 26

ORCHARDS were cultivated ²⁷, and we find figs, grapes, nuts, almonds, pears, and apples mentioned. ²⁸ Lac acidum, perhaps butter-milk or whey, was used in a monastery in very handsome vessels, called creches, from Hokeday to Michaelmas, and lac dulce from Michaelmas to Martinmas. In the same place, placentas were allowed in the Easter and Whitsun weeks, and on some other festivals, and broth or soups every day. ²⁹ In another monastery we find land given to provide beans, salt, and honey for the brothers. ²⁰ From the panegyric of Aldhelm, we may infer that honey was a favourite diet; for he says, that it excels all the dishes of delicacies and peppered broths. ³¹

³⁵ Bon. Ep. Mag. Bib. Pal. xvi. p. 50.

³⁶ The allowances of the Abingdon monastery may be taken as a specimen. See them in Dugd. Mon. p. 104.

²⁷ 3 Gale Script. 490.

²² Ingulf, p. 50.

³⁹ Dugd. Mon. p. 104. The creche contained septem pollices ad profunditatem a summitate unius usque ad profundum lateris ulterius. Ibid.

³º 3 Gale Script. 445.

³¹ Ald. de Laud. Virg. p. 296.

In the MS. before mentioned a colloquy occurs with the baker (bæcere). 'Of what use is your art? we can live long without you.' "You may live through some space without my art, but not long, nor so well; for without my craft every table would seem empty, and without bread (hlafe) all meat would become nauseous. I strengthen the heart of man, and little ones could not do without me." 32

In the same MS. the food of children is thus mentioned: 'What do you eat to-day?' "As yet I feed on flesh-meat, because I am a child living under the rod."—'What more do you eat?' "Herbs, eggs, fish, cheese, butter, and beans, and all clean things I eat with many thanks." 33

They appear to have used great quantities of salt, from the numerous grants of land which specify salt-pans as important articles. In the end of autumn they killed and salted much meat for their winter consumption. It is probable that their provision of winter fodder for their cattle was very imperfect, and that salted meat was in a great measure their food till the spring re-clothed the fields with verdure. One part of the dialogue above alluded to is on the salter.

'Salter! what does your craft profit us?'
"Much: none of you can enjoy pleasure in your dinner or supper, unless my art be pro-

BOOK pitious to him." - 'How?' "Which of you can enjoy savoury meats without the smack of salt? Who could sell the contents of his cellar or his storehouses without my craft? Lo! all butter (buter gethweor) and cheese (cys gerun) would perish, unless you used me."34

> . The Anglo-Saxon ladies were not excluded from the society of the male sex at their meals. It was at dinner that the king's mother urged Dunstan to accept the vacant bishopric 35, and, it appears, from many passages in Saxon writings, and from the drawings in their MSS. that both sexes were together at their seasons of refreshment.

> WE have an account of Ethelstan's dining with his relation Ethelfleda. The royal providers, it says, knowing that the king had promised her the visit, came the day before to see if every preparation was ready and suitable. Having inspected all, they told her, "You have plenty of every thing, provided your mead holds out." The king came with a great number of attendants at the appointed time, and, after hearing mass, entered joyfully in the dinner apartment; but unfortunately in the first salutation, their copious draughts exhausted the mead vessel. Dunstan's sagacity had foreseen the event, and provided against it; and though " the cup-bearers, as is the custom at royal feasts, were all the day serving it up in cut horns,

³⁴ MS. Cott. Tib. A. 3.

³⁵ MS. Cott. Cleop. B. 13. and Nero, C. 7.

and other vessels of various sizes," the liquor CHAP. was not found to be deficient. This, of course, very much delighted his majesty and his companions; and, as Dunstan chose to give it a miraculous appearance, it procured him infinite credit. 36

An historian of the twelfth century contrasts, with much regret, the fashion, introduced by the Normans at court, of only one entertainment a day, with the custom of one of our preceding kings, who feasted his courtiers daily with four ample banquets. He contends that parsimony produced the direful change, though it was ascribed to dignity. 37 Many good customs have originated from selfish causes; but no one will now dispute, that both mental and moral refinement must have been much advanced by this diminution of the incitements and the opportunities of gluttony and inebriety. We may remember of the king Hardicanute, so celebrated for his conviviality, that he died at a feast.

A FEW circumstances may be added of their fasting. It is mentioned in Edgar's regulations, as a part of the penance of a rich man, that he should fast on bread, green herbs, and 38 water.

³⁶ Cleop. B. 13. p. 67., and Acta Sanct. 29 May, p. 349, 350.

³⁷ Hen. Hunt. lib. vi. p. 365. Malmsbury remarks that the profusion of the English feasts was increased after the Danish visits, p. 248.

³⁸ Wilk. Leg. Sax. 97.

BOOK It is expressed in another part, that a layman during his penitence should eat no flesh, nor drink any thing that might inebriate. 39 The law of Wihtræd severely punished the nonobservance of fast-days. If any man gave meat to his servants on these days, he was declared liable to the pillory, or literally the neck-catch, heals-fang. If the servant eat it of his own accord, he was fined six shillings, or was to suffer in his hide. 40

39 Wilk. Leg. Sax. 94.

4º Ibid. 11.

CHAP. IV.

Their Drinks and Cookery.

A LE and mead were their favourite drinks, CHAP. and wine was an occasional luxury. Of the ale three sorts are noticed. In a charter, two tuns of clear ale, and ten mittan or measures of Welsh ale are reserved.' In another, a cumb full of lithes, or mild ale. Warm wine is also mentioned.

The answer of the lad, in the Saxon colloquy, to the question, what he drank, was, "Ale if I have it, or water if I have not." On being asked why he does not drink wine, he says, "I am not so rich that I can buy me wine, and wine is not the drink of children or the weak-minded, but of the elders and the wise." 4

In the ancient calendar of the eleventh century, there are various figures pictured, to accompany the different months. In April, three persons appear sitting and drinking: one person

Sax. Chron. 75.

² Two tuns full of hlutres aloth, a cumb full of lithes aloth, and a cumb full of welisces aloth, are the gafol reserved in a grant of Offa. Dugd. Mon. p. 126.

³ Bede, 257. ⁴ MS. Tib. A. 3.

BOOK is pouring out liquor into a horn; another is holding a horn to his mouth. 5

We have the list of the liquors used at a great Anglo-Saxon feast, in a passage of Henry of Huntingdon, which describes an atrocious catastrophe:—

AT a feast in the king's hall at Windsor, Harold, the son of Godwin, was serving the Confessor with wine, when Tosti, his brother, stimulated by envy at his possessing a larger portion of the royal favour than himself, seized Harold by the hair in the king's presence. In a rage, Tosti left the company, and went to Hereford, where his brother had ordered a great royal banquet to be prepared. There he seized his brother's attendants, and cutting off their heads and limbs, he placed them in the vessels of wine, mead, ale, pigment, morat, and cyder. He then sent to the king a message, that he was going to his farm, where he should find plenty of salt meat, but had taken care to carry some with him. 6 The pigment was a sweet and odoriferous liquor, made of honey, wine, and spiceries of various kinds. The morat was made of honey, diluted with the juice of mulberries. 7

As the canons were severe on drunkenness, though the manners of society made all their regulations ineffectual, it was thought necessary

⁵ MS. Tib. B. 5. ⁶ Hen. Hunt. lib. vi. p. 367.

⁷ Du Cange in voc. and Henry's History of England, iv. p. 396.

to define what was considered to be improper CHAP. and penal intoxication. "This is drunkenness, when the state of the mind is changed, the tongue stammers, the eyes are disturbed, the head is giddy, the belly is swelled, and pain follows." To atone for this, fasts, proportioned in duration to the quality of the offender, were enjoined. 8

It will not be uninteresting to add the description of a feast, as given in Judith by an Anglo-Saxon poet:

Then was Holofernes Enchanted with the wine of men: In the hall of the guests He laughed and shouted. He roared and dinned. That the children of men might hear afar, How the sturdy one Stormed and clamoured, Animated and elated with wine. He admonished amply Those sitting on the bench That they should bear it well. So was the wicked one all day The lord and his men, Drunk with wine; The stern dispenser of wealth; Till that they swimming lay Over drunk, All his nobility As they were death slain. Their property poured about. So commanded the lord of men To fill to those sitting at the feast, Till the dark night Approached the children of men.9

^{*} Spelm. Concilia, 286.

⁹ Frag. Judith.

ВООК VII. WE have a glance of their customs, as to drinking, in this short passage: "When all were satisfied with their dinner, and the tables were removed, they continued drinking till the evening." 10

They seem to have had places like taverns or ale-houses, where liquors were sold; for a a priest was forbidden by a law to eat or drink at ceapealethelum, literally, places where ale was sold.¹¹

ETHELWOLD allowed his monastery a great bowl, from which the obbæ of the monks were filled twice a-day for their dinner and supper. On their festivals he allowed them at dinner a sextarium of mead between six, and the same quantity at supper between twelve of the brothers. On certain of the great high feasts of the year, he gave them a measure of wine. 12

They boiled, baked, and broiled their victuals. We read of their meat dressed in a boiling vessel 13, of their fish having been 14 broiled, and of an oven heated for baking loaves. 15 The term abacan is also applied to meat. In the rule of St. Benedict, two sanda, or dishes of sodden syflian, or soup bouilli, are 16 mentioned. Bede mentions a goose that hung on the wall

¹⁰ Gale Scrip. iii. p. 441.

Wilk. Leg. Sax. 180. So Egbert exhorts. Spel. Conc. 260.

¹³ Dugd. Mon. 104.

¹³ Bede, p. 255.

¹⁴ Bede, 238.

¹⁵ MS. Vesp. D. 14. p. 146.

¹⁶ MS. Tib. A. 3.

taken down to be boiled.17 The word seathan, CHAP. to boil, deserves notice, because the noun, seath, from which it is derivable, implies a pit. As we read in the South Sea islands of the natives dressing their victuals in little pits lined with stones, the expression may have been originally derived from a similar practice. A cook appears as an appendix to every monastery, and it was a character important enough to be inserted in the laws. In the cloisters it was a male office; elsewhere it was chiefly assumed by the female sex. In the dialogue already cited, the cook says, " If you expel me from your society, you would eat your herbs green, and your flesh raw." He is answered, 'We can ourselves seethe what is to be seethed, and broil what things are to be broiled. 18

They seem to have attended to cookery not merely as a matter of taste, but of indispensable decorum. It was one of their regulations, that if a person eat any thing half dressed, ignorantly, he should fast three days; if knowingly, four days. Perhaps as the uncivilized Northmen were, in their pagan state, addicted to eat raw flesh, the clergy of the Anglo-Saxons were anxious to keep their improved countrymen from relapsing into such barbarous customs. 19

¹⁷ Bede, 255. 18 MS. Tib.

¹⁹ Spelm. Concil. 287. The same principle perhaps led them to add these regulations: "For eating or drinking what a cat or dog has spoiled, he shall sing an hundred

BOOK In the drawings which accompany some Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, we have some delineation of their customs at table.20 In one drawing, a party is at table, seated with the females by the side of the men in this order: a man, a lady; a man, a lady; two men, and another lady. The two first are looking towards each other, as if talking together; the three in the middle are engaged with each other, and so are the two last; each have a cup or horn in their hand. The table is oblong, and covered with a tablecloth that hangs low down from the table; a knife, a horn, a bowl, a dish, and some loaves appear. The men are uncovered; the women have their usual head-dress, 21

In another drawing, the table is a sharp oval,

psalms, or fast a day. For giving another any liquor in which a mouse or a weasel shall be found dead, a layman shall do penance for four days; a monk shall sing three hundred psalms." Spelm. Concil. p. 287.

The industrious and useful Strutt has copied these drawings in the first volume of his Horda Angelcynnan. Nothing can more satisfactorily illustrate the manners of our ancestors than such publications of their ornamental drawings; for, as Strutt truly observes in his preface, "though these pictures do not bear the least resemblance of the things they were originally intended to represent, yet they nevertheless are the undoubted characteristics of the customs of that period in which each illuminator or designer lived."

This is in Strutt's work, plate xvi. fig. 2., and is taken from the Cotton MS. Claud. B. 4. The MS. consists of excerpta from the Pentateuch and the book of Joshua, which are adorned with historical figures, some of which are those above alluded to.

also covered with an ample cloth; upon it, CHAP. besides a knife and a spoon, there are a bowl, with a fish, some loaves of bread, and two other dishes. Some part of the costume is more like the manners of Homer's heroes than of modern times. At the angles of the tables two attendants are upon their knees, with a dish in one hand, and each holding up a spit with the other, from which the persons feasting are about to cut something. One of these persons, to whom the servants minister with so much respect, is holding a whole fish with one hand, and a knife in the other. 22

In the drawing which accompanies Lot feasting the angels, the table is oblong, rounded at the ends, and covered with a cloth. Upon it is a bowl, with an animal's head like a pig's; another bowl is full of some round things like apples. These, with loaves or cakes of bread, seem to constitute the repast. There are two horns upon the table, and one of the angels has a knife. ²³ As no forks appear in any of the plates, and are not mentioned elsewhere, we may presume that our ancestors used their hands instead.

THERE is one drawing of men killing and dressing meat. One man is holding a sheep by

²² See Strutt, plate xvi. fig. 1.

²³ Strutt, plate xvi. fig. 3., and Claud. B. 4. Forks are supposed to have been introduced into England, from Italy, by Tom Coriate, in James the First's time; yet, I think, I have seen them mentioned as in use before his time.

BOOK his horns, while a lad strikes at its neck with an axe; behind him is a young man severing an animal's head from his body with an axe. Another has put a long stick, with a hook attached to it, into a cauldron, as if to pull up meat. The cauldron is upon a trivet of four legs as high as the servant's knee, within which the fire is made, and blazing up to the cauldron. 24

²⁴ Strutt, plate xvii. fig. 2., and from Claud. B. 4. The tapestry of Bayeux is as useful in showing the cookery and feasting of the Normans.

CHAP. V.

Their Dress.

THE Anglo-Saxons had become so much ac- CHAP. quainted with the conveniences of civilised life as to have both variety and vanity of dress. Some change took place in their apparel after their conversion to Christianity, which rendered their former customs disreputable; for, at a council, held in 785, it is said, "You put on your garments in the manner of the Pagans, whom your fathers expelled from the world; an astonishing thing, that you imitate those whose life you always hated."

It is difficult at this distance of time to apprehend with precision the meaning of the terms of their dress which time has permitted to reach us, and to state them with that order and illustration which will enable the reader to conceive justly of their costume. The imperfections of our attempt must be excused by its difficulty. We will begin with what we have been able to collect of an Anglo-Saxon lady's dress.

THE wife described by Aldhelm has necklaces and bracelets, and also rings with gems on

L' Concil. Calchut. Spelm. Conc. p. 300.

her fingers. Her hair was dressed artificially; he mentions the twisted hairs delicately curled with the iron of those adorning her.

In this part of her dress she was a contrast to the religious virgin, whose hair was entirely neglected.² Their hair was highly valuable and reputable among the Saxon ladies. Judith is perpetually mentioned with epithets allusive to her hair. Her twisted locks are more than once noticed:

> The maid of the Creator, With twisted locks, Took then a sharp sword.

She with the twisted locks
Then struck her hateful enemy,
Meditating ill,
With the ruddy sword.

The most illustrious virgin Conducted and led them, Resplendent with her twisted locks, To the bright city of Bethulia.³

THE laws mention a free woman, loc bore, wearing her locks as a distinguishing circumstance. 4 Judith is also described with her ornaments:

The prudent one adorned with gold ordered her maidens

² Aldhelm de Laud. Virg. p. 307.

³ Frag. Judith, ed. Thwaite.

Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 6.

Then commanded he The blessed virgin With speed to fetch To his bed rest, With bracelets laden, With rings adorned.⁵



ALDHELM also describes the wife as loving to paint her cheeks with the red colour of ⁶ stibium. The art of painting the face is not the creature of refinement; the most barbarous nations seem to be the most liberal in their use of this fancied ornament.

The will of Wynflæd makes us acquainted with several articles of the dress and ornaments of an Anglo-Saxon lady. She gives to Ethelflæda, one of her daughters, her engraved beah, or bracelet, and her covering mantle (mentel). To Eadgyfa, another of her daughters, she leaves her best dun tunic, and her better mantle, and her covering garment. She also mentions her pale tunics, her torn cyrtel, and other linen, web, or garment. She likewise notices her white cyrtel, and the cuffs and ribband (cuffian and bindan).

Among the ornaments mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon documents we read of a golden fly, beautifully adorned with gems ⁸; of golden vermiculated necklaces ⁹; of a bulla that had be-

Frag. Jud.

⁶ Aldhelm. p. 307.

⁷ Our Saxon scholar, Hickes, has given a transcript of this will, in his preface to his Gram. Anglo-Sax. p. 22.

^{*} Dugd. Mon. 240.

⁹ Ibid. 263.

BOOK longed to the grandmother of the lady spoken of 10; of golden head-bands 11, and of a neckcross. 12

> THE ladies had also gowns; for a bishop of Winchester sends as a present "a short gown (gunna) sewed in our manner." 13 Thus we find the mantle, the kirtle, and the gown, mentioned by these names among the Saxons, and even the ornament of cuffs.

> In the drawings on the manuscripts of these times, the women appear with a long loose robe, reaching down to the ground, and large loose sleeves. Upon their head is a hood or veil, which, falling down before, was wrapped round the neck and breast.14 All the ladies in the drawing have their necks, from the chin, closely wrapped in this manner, and in none of them is a fine waist attempted to be displayed, nor have their heads any other covering than their hood.

In the dress of the men the province of female taste was intruded upon by the ornaments they used. They had sometimes gold and precious stones round their neck 15, and the men of con-

¹⁰ Dugd. Mon. 268.

Thorpe Reg. Roffen. 26., and Mag. Bib. xvi. p. 7.

¹² In the Archbishop's Will. Cott. Lib. MS. Tib. A. 3.

^{15 16} Mag. Bib. 82. A gown made of otter's skin is mentioned, p. 88.

¹⁴ Strutt's Horda Angelcynn. i. p. 47.

¹⁵ Bede, p. 332. Malmsbury mentions the Angles as having heavy gold bracelets on their arms, and, with pictured impressions "picturatis stigmatibus," a kind of tattooing on their skin, p. 102.

sequence or wealth usually had expensive brace- CHAP lets on their arms, and rings on their fingers. It is singular that the bracelets of the male sex were more costly than those allotted to the fair. In an Anglo-Saxon will, the testator bequeaths to his lord a beah, or bracelet, of eighty gold mancusa, and to his lady one of thirty. He had two neck bracelets, one of forty, and another of eighty gold mancusa, and two golden bands. 16 We read of two golden bracelets, and five gold ornaments, called sylas, sent by an Anglo-Saxon to her friend. 17 Their rings are frequently mentioned: an archbishop bequeaths one in his will 18, and a king sent a gold ring, with twelve sagi, as a present to a 19 bishop. The ring appears to have been worn on the finger next to the little finger, and on the right hand, for a Saxon law calls that the gold finger; and we find a right hand was once cut off on account of this ornament.

In some of the stately apparel of the male sex, we see that fondness for gorgeous finery which their sturdier character might have been expected to have disdained. We read of silk garments woven with golden eagles. 20; so a

¹⁶ See the will of Byrhtric in Thorpe's Reg. Roffen. p.25.; also in Hickes's Thes.

¹⁷ Mag. Bib. Pat. xvi. p. 92. Wynfleda, in her will, leaves a man a wooden cup adorned with gold, that he might augment his beah with the gold. Hickes's Pref.

¹⁸ Cott. MS. Claud. C. 125.

¹⁹ Mag. Bib. xvi. p. 89.

²⁰ Ingulf, p. 61.

BOOK king's coronation garment was of silk, woven with gold flowers 21, and his cloak is mentioned distinguished by its costly workmanship, and its gold and gems. 22 Such was the avidity for these distinctions, that Elfric, in his canons, found it necessary to exhort the clergy not to be ranc, that is, proud, with their rings, and not to have their garments made too ranclike. 23

> THEY had silk, linen, and woollen garments. A bishop gave in the eighth century, as a present to one abroad, a woollen tunic, and another of linen, adding, "as it was the custom of the Anglo-Saxon's to wear it." 24 The use of linen was not uncommon; for it is remarked, as a peculiarity of a nun, that she rarely wore linen, but chiefly woollen garments. 25

> SILK, from its cost, cannot have been common; but it was often used by the great and wealthy. Ethelbert, king of Kent, gave a silken part of dress, called an armileasia. 26 Bede mentions two silken pallia of incomparable workmanship.²⁷ His own remains were inclosed in

²³ Ingulf, p. 61.

^{22 3} Gale Script. 494.

²³ Wilk. Leg. Sax. 158. Ranc and ranclike originally meant proud and gorgeous. The words have now become appropriated to express dignity of situation.

^{24 16} Mag. Bib. p. 82.

²⁵ Bede, lib. iv. c. 19. The interior tunic of St. Neot is described to have been ex panno villoso, in the Irish manner. Dugd. Mon. 368.

²⁶ Dugd. Mon. 24.

²⁷ Bede, p. 297. A pallia holoserica is mentioned as a present, in Mag. Bib. xvi. p. 97.

silk. 28 It often adorned the altars of the CHAP. church; and we read of a present to a West-Saxon bishop of a casula, expressed to be not entirely of silk, but mixed with goats' wool. 29

The delineations of the Saxon manuscripts almost universally represent the hair of the men as divided from the crown to the forehead, and combed down the sides of the head in waving ringlets. Their beards were continuations of their whiskers on each side, meeting the hair from the chin, but there dividing, and ending in two forked points. Young men usually, and sometimes servants, are represented without beards. The heads of the soldiers are covered; but workmen, and even nobles, are frequently represented, as in the open air, without any hats or caps. ³⁰

To have a beard was forbidden to the ³¹ clergy. But the historian of Malmsbury informs us, that in the time of Harold the Second, the English laity shaved their beards, but allowed the hair of their upper lip a full growth. ³² The tapestry of Bayeux displays this costume: Harold and most of the figures have their mustachios, but no beards. King Edward, however, has his full beard. In the drawings of the Evangelists, in the fine Cotton MS. ³³, Mark and John have

²⁸ Mag. Bib. xvi. p. 88.

²⁹ Ibid. p. 50.

^{3°} See the plates in Strutt's Hord. Angel.

³¹ Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 85.

³¹ Malmsb. lib. iii.

³³ Nero, D. 4.

BOOK neither beards nor mustachios, but Matthew

They had shoes, or scoh, with thongs. Bede's account of Cuthbert is curious: he says, when the saint had washed the feet of those who came to him, they compelled him to take off his own shoes, that his feet might also be made clean, for so little did he attend to his bodily appearance, that he often kept his shoes, which were of leather, on his feet for several months together, frequently from Easter to Easter, without taking them off. They are the drawings. Sometimes, however, the legs of the men appear in the drawings as covered half way up with a kind of bandage wound round, or else with a tight stocking reaching above the knee. The says of th

THE Anglo-Saxons represented in the Bayeux tapestry are dressed in this manner; both the great and their inferiors have caps or bonnets on their heads, which are kept on even in the presence of the king, sitting with his sceptre on the throne. The steersman of one of the ships has a hat on, with a projecting flap turning upwards. Most of the figures have close coats,

³⁴ Bede Vit. Cuthb. p. 243. In the life of St. Neot he is said to have lost his scoh: he saw a fox having the thwanges of his shoe in his mouth. Vesp. D. xiv. p. 144.

³⁵ Strutt, Hord. Ang. p. 47. In Saint Benedict's rule, MS. Tib. A. 3. socks (soccas) and stockings (hosan) are mentioned; also two other coverings for the legs and feet, called meon and fiand reaf fota, and the earm slife for the upper part of the body.

with sleeves to the wrists. 36 They are girded CHAP. round them with a belt, and have loose skirts like kelts, but not reaching quite to the knee. Harold on horseback, with his falcon, has breeches, which do not cover his knee, and a cloak flowing behind him. His knights have breeches covering the knees, and cloaks, which, like Harold's, are buttoned on the right shoulder. 37 One of those standing before the king has a cloak, or sagum, which falls down to its full length, and reaches just below the bend of the knee. 38 Harold, when he is about to go into the ship, wears a sort of jacket with small flaps. In the ship he appears with his cloak and the surrounding skirts, which are exhibited with a border; but when he takes the oath to Wilkiam, he has a cloak or robe reaching nearly to his heels and buttoned on the breast. They have always belts on. Most of them have shoes, which seem close round the ancle; others, even the great men, sometimes have none. 39

³⁶ Strutt has given a complete drawing of a Saxon close coat, in Tab. 15. It appears to have been put over the head like a shirt.

39 For a description of this clasp or button, see Strutt, p. 46.

³⁸ It was probably of cloaks like these that Charlemagne exclaimed, "of what use are these little cloaks? We cannot be covered by them in bed. When I am on horseback they cannot defend me from the wind and rain; and when we retire for other occasions, I am starved with cold in my legs." St. Gall. ap. Bouquet Recueil, tom. vii.

39 Strutt remarks from the drawings, that the kings and nobles, when in their state dress, were habited in a loose

VII.

BOOK In the history of the Lombards, the Anglo-Saxon garments are stated to have been loose and flowing, and chiefly made of linen, adorned with broad borders, woven or embroidered with various colours. 40 In the MSS, of the Saxon Gospels, Nero, D. 4., the four Evangelists are drawn in colours, and the garments in which they are represented may be considered as specimens of the Anglo-Saxon dress.

> MATTHEW has a purple under-gown, or vest, rather close, coming down to the wrists, with a vellow border at the neck, wrists, and the bottom. His upper robe is green, with red stripes, much looser than the other. His feet have no shoes, but a lacing, as for sandles. There is a brown curtain, with rings, and a yellow bottom. His stool has a brown cushion, but no back. He writes on his knee.

> MARK wears a purple robe, striped with blue, buttoned at the neck, where it opens and shows an under garment of light blue, striped with red. His cushion is blue: he has a footstool and a small round table.

> coat, which reached down to their ancles, and had over that a long robe, fastened, over both shoulders, on the middle of the breast, with a clasp or buckle. He adds, that the edges and bottoms of their coats, as well as of their robes, were often trimmed with a broad gold edging, or else flowered with different colours. The soldiers and common people wore close coats, reaching only to the knee, and a short cloak over their left shoulder which buckled on the right. kings and nobles were habited in common in a dress similar to this, but richer and more elegant. Strutt, Hord. Ang. i. See before. p. 46.

LUKE'S under-dress is a sort of lilac, with CHAP. light green stripes. Over this is a purple robe with red stripes. The arm is of the colour of the vest, and comes through the robe. His wrist and neck have a border.

John's under-garment is a pea-green with red stripes; his upper robe is purple with blue stripes; this is very loose, and, opening at the breast; shows the dress beneath. These pictures show, what many passages also imply, that our ancestors were fond of many colours. 41 The council in 785 ordered the clergy not to wear the tinctured colours of India, nor precious garments. 42 The clergy, whose garments were thus compulsorily simplified, endeavoured to extend their fashion to those of the laity. Boniface, the Anglo-Saxon missionary, in his letter to the archbishop of Canterbury, inveighs against luxuries of dress, and declares that those garments which are adorned with very broad studs, and images of worms, announce the coming of Anti-Christ. 43 In the same spirit, at the council of Cloveshoe, the nuns were exhorted to pass their time rather in reading books and singing hymns, than in weaving and working garments of empty pride in diversified colours. 44 That

⁴¹ Bede mentions, that in Saint Cuthbert's monastery they used clothing of the natural wool, and not of varied or precious colours, p. 242. Two cloaks are mentioned among the letters of Boniface, one of which is said to be of very artful workmanship, the other of a tinctured colour.

⁴² Spel. Concil. p. 294.

⁴³ Ibid. 241.

⁴⁴ Ibid. 256.

BOOK they lined their garments with furs made from sables, beavers, and foxes, or, when they wished to be least expensive, with the skins of lambs or cats, we learn from the life of Wulstan. 45

> ⁴⁵ Anglia Sacra, vol. ii. p. 259. Our Henry, whose remarks on the dress of our ancestors are well worth reading. has given a translation of the passage in his History, vol. iv. p. 289.

CHAP. VI.

Their Houses, Furniture, and Luxuries.

In their ecclesiastical buildings the Anglo-Saxons were expensive and magnificent; their dwelling-houses seem to have been small and inconvenient.' Domestic architecture is one of the things that most conspicuously displays and attends the progress of national wealth and taste. The more we recede into the antiquities of every state, we invariably find the habitations of the people ruder and less commodious.

THEIR furniture we can only know as it happens to be mentioned and sometimes imperfectly described in some of their writings. They may have had many things which we have, but we must conceive of all we find enumerated, that it was heavy, rude, and unworkmanlike. It is in a polished age, and among industrious and wealthy nations, that the mechanical arts attain excellence; and that every convenience of domestic life combines always finished neat-

Strutt has copied a Saxon house from the MS. Cleop. C. 8. in his fig. 3. of Plate I. The building of the tower of Babel, in his sixth plate, from MS. Claud. B. 4. may be considered as another specimen of their domestic architecture.

BOOK ness, and frequently elegance and taste, with vii. economy of materials, and utility.

THE Anglo-Saxons had many conveniences and luxuries, which men so recently emerging from the barbarian state could not have derived from their own invention. They were indebted for these to their conversion to Christianity. When the Gothic nations exchanged their idolatry for the Christian faith, hierarchies arose in every converted state, which maintained a close and perpetual intercourse with Rome and with each other. From the letters of Pope Gregory, of our Boniface, and many others, we perceive that an intercourse of personal civilities, visits, messages, and presents, was perpetually taking place. Whatever was rare, curious, or valuable, which one person possessed, he communicated, and not unfrequently gave to his acquaintance. This is very remarkable in the letters of Boniface and his friends, of whom some were in England, some in France, some in Germany, and elsewhere. The most cordial phrases of urbanity and affection are usually followed by a present of apparel, the aromatic productions of the East, little articles of furniture and domestic comfort, books, and whatever else promised to be acceptable to the person addressed. This reciprocity of liberality, and the perpetual visits which all ranks of the state were in the habit of making to Rome, the seat and centre

² These are in the sixteenth volume of the Magna Bibliotheca Patrum.

of all the arts, science, wealth, and industry of CHAP. the day, occasioned a general diffusion and use of the known conveniences and approved inventions which had then appeared.

Among the furniture of their rooms we find hangings, to be suspended on the walls, most of them silken, some with the figures of golden birds in needle-work, some woven, and some plain.3 At another time, a veil or piece of hanging is mentioned, on which was sewed the destruction of Troy.4 These were royal presents. We also read of the curtain of a lady. on which was woven the actions of her husband, in memory of his probity. 5 These articles of manufacture for domestic use are obviously alluded to by Aldhelm in his simile, in which he mentions the texture of hangings or curtains; their being stained with purple and different varieties of colours, and their images, embroidery, and weaving. Their love of gaudy colouring was as apparent in these as in their dress, for he says, "if finished of one colour, uniform, they would not seem beautiful to the 'eye." Curtains and hangings are very often mentioned; sometimes in Latin phrases, pallia or ⁷ cortinas; sometimes in the Saxon term wahrift. Thus Wynfleda bequeaths a long heall wahrift and a short one, and Wulfur bequeaths an heall

³ Ingulf, p. 53.

⁴ Ibid. p. 9.

³ Gale Script. 495.

⁶ Aldhelm de Laud. Virg. 283.

⁷ Dugd. 130. 3 Gale, 418. and 495. Ingulf, 53.

BOOK wahrifta; the same testator also leaves a heall reafes. 8 Whether this is another expression for a hanging to the hall, or whether it alludes to any thing like a carpet, the expression itself will not decide. The probability is, that it expresses a part of the hangings. We can perceive the reasons why hangings were used in such early times: their carpenters were not exact and perfect joiners; their buildings were full of crevices, and hangings were therefore rather a necessity than a luxury, as they kept out the wind from the inhabitants. Nothing can more strongly prove their necessity, than that Alfred, to preserve his lights from the wind, even in the royal palaces, was obliged to have recourse to lanthorns.9 Their hangings we find were not cheap enough to be used perpetually, and therefore when the king gave them to the monastery, he adds the injunction to the one gift, that it should be suspended on his anniversary, and to another, that it should be used on festivals. 10

> Benches " and seats, and their coverings, are also mentioned. In one gift, seven setl hrægel, or seat coverings 12, occur. Wynfleda bequeaths three setl hrægl.13 Their footstools appear to have been much ornamented. Ingulf mentions two great pedalia with lions interwoven, and two

⁸ Hickes Præf. and Diss. Ep. 54.

See vol. ii. of this work.

¹⁰ Ingulf, 53.

¹¹ Dugd. Mon. 130.

¹² Dugd. 216.

¹³ Hickes ubi sup.

smaller ones sprinkled with flowers. 14 Some of CHAP. their seats or benches represented in the drawings, have animals' heads and legs at their extremities. 15 Their seats seem to have been benches and stools.

Their tables are sometimes very costly: we read of two tables made of silver and ¹⁶ gold. Æthelwold, in Edgar's reign, is said to have made a silver table worth three hundred pounds. ¹⁷ We also read of a wooden table for an altar, which was adorned with ample and solid plates of silver, and with gems various in colour and species. ¹⁸

Candlesticks of various sorts are mentioned; two large candlesticks of bone (gebonede candelsticcan), and six smaller of the same kind, are enumerated ¹⁹, as are also two silver candelabra, gilt ²⁰, and two candelabra well and honourably made. ²¹ Bede once mentions that two candles were lighted. ²²

Hand-bells also appear. At one time twelve are stated to have been used in a ²³ monastery. A disciple of Bede sends to Lullus, in France, "the bell which I have at my hand." ²⁴ A silver mirror is also once mentioned. ²⁵

¹⁴ Ingulf, 53.

¹⁵ See Strutt, tab. 10.

¹⁶ Dugd. Mon. 40.

¹⁷ Ibid. 104.

^{18 3} Gale Script. 420.

¹⁹ Dugd. Mon. 221.

²⁰ Dugd. Mon. 40.

²¹ Ibid. 130. Candelabris ex argento ductilibus. Ib. 104.

²³ Bede, 259.

²³ Dugd. Mon. 221.

²⁴ 16 Mag. Bib. 88.

²⁵ Dugd. 24.

BOOK VII.

Or bed furniture we find in an Anglo-Saxon's will bed-clothes (beddreafes), with a curtain (hryfte), and sheet (hoppscytan), and all that thereto belongs; to his son he gives the bedreafe and all the clothes that appertain to 26 it. An Anglo-Saxon lady gives to one of her children two chests and their contents, her best bed-curtain, linen, and all the clothes belonging to it. To another child she leaves two chests. and "all the bed-clothes that to one bed belong." She also mentions her red 27 tent (giteld). On another occasion we read of a pillow of straw. 28 A goat-skin bed-covering was sent to an Anglo-Saxon abbot.29 In Judith we read of the gilded fly-net hung about the leader's bed. 3° Bear-skins are sometimes noticed as if a part of bed furniture. There is a drawing of a Saxon bed and curtain in Claud. B. 4., which may be seen in Strutt, Horda Angelcynn, pl. xiii. fig. 2. The head and the bottom of the bed seem to be both boarded, and the pillows look as if made of platted straw. Not to go into a bed, but to lay on the floor, was occasionally enjoined as a penance. 31

For their food and conviviality they used many expensive articles. It was indeed in these that their abundant use of the precious metals principally appeared. We perpetually read of silver cups, and sometimes of silver gilt. Byrh-

²⁶ Hickes Diss. Ep. 54.

^{28 3} Gale Script. 418.

^{3°} Frag. Jud.

²⁷ Hickes Præf.

²⁹ 16 Mag. Bib. 52.

Wilk. Leg. Anglo-Sax. p. 97.

tric, in his will, bequeaths three silver 32 cups. CHAP. Wulfur bequeaths four cups, two of which he describes as of four pounds' value. 33 Wynfleda gives, besides four silver cups, a cup with a fringed edge, a wooden cup variegated with gold, a wooden knobbed cup, and two smicere scencing cuppan, or very handsome drinking cups. 34 In other places we read of a golden cup, with a golden dish 35; a gold cup of immense weight 36; a dish adorned with gold, and another with Grecian workmanship. 37 A lady gave a golden cup, weighing four marks and a half. 38 The king of Kent sent to Boniface, the Anglo-Saxon missionary in Germany, a silver bason, gilt within, weighing three pounds and a half. 39 On another occasion, a great silver dish of excellent workmanship, and of great value, is noticed. 40 Two silver cups, weighing twelve marks, were used by the monks in a refectory, to serve their drink. 41 Two silver basons were given by a lady to a 42 monastery. A king, in 833, gave his gilt cup, engraved without with vine-dressers fighting dragons, which he called his cross-bowl, because it had a cross marked within, and it had four angles pro-

jecting like a similar figure 43; two silver cups,

³² Thorp. Reg. Roff. 30.

³⁴ Hickes Præf. p. 22.

³⁶ Dudg. Mon. 104.

³⁸ Ibid. 240.

⁴º Dugd. 123.

^{42 3} Gale Script. 418.

³³ Hickes Diss. Ep. 54.

³⁵ Dugd. Mon. 21.

³⁷ Ibid. 40.

^{39 16} Mag. Bib. p. 64.

^{41 3} Gale Script. 406.

³ Ingulf, p. 9.

BOOK with covers, in one place 44; five silver cups in another 45; and such-like notices, sufficiently prove to us that the rich and great among the Anglo-Saxons, had no want of plate. At other times we meet with cups of bone 46, brazen dishes 47, and a coffer made of bones. 48 We may infer that the less affluent used vessels of wood and horn. A council ordered that no cup or dish made of horn should be used in the sacred offices, 49

> Horns were much used at table. Two buffalo horns are in Wynfleda's will. 50 Four horns are noticed in the list of a monastery's 51 effects. Three horns worked with gold and silver occur 52; and the Mercian king gave to Croyland monastery the horn of his table, "that the elder monks may drink thereout on festivals, and in their benedictions remember sometimes the soul of the donor, Witlaf." 53 The curiously carved horn which is still preserved in York cathedral was made in the Anglo-Saxon times, and deserves the notice of the inquisitive, for its magnitude and workmanship.

> GLASS vessels, which are among the most valuable of our present comforts, were little used in the time of Bede and Boniface. A disciple of Bede asked Lullus, in France, if there

⁴⁴ Dugd. 40.

⁴⁶ Ibid. 221.

^{48 16} Mag. Bib. 93.

⁵⁰ Hickes Præf.

⁵² Dugd. 40.

⁴⁵ Ibid. 221.

⁴⁷ Bede, lib. ii. c. 16.

⁴⁹ Spelm. Conc. 295.

⁵¹ Dugd. 221.

⁵³ Ingulf, 9.

were any man in his parish who could make CHAP. glass vessels well; if such a man lived there, he desired that he might be persuaded to come to England, because, adds he, "we are ignorant and helpless in this art." ⁵⁴ Bede mentions lamps of glass, and vessels for many ⁵⁵uses. Glass became more used in the conveniences of domestic life towards the period of the Norman conquest.

Gold and silver were also applied to adorn their sword-hilts, their saddles and bridles, and their banners. ⁵⁶ Their gold rings contained gems; and even their garments, saddles, and bridles, were sometimes jewelled. ⁵⁷

The presents which the father of Alfred took with him to Rome deserve enumeration, from their value, and because they show the supply of the precious metals which the Anglo-Saxons possessed; we derive the knowledge of them from Anastasius, a contemporary: a crown of the purest gold, weighing four pounds; two basons of the purest gold, weighing * * * * * * * pounds; a sword, bound with purest gold; two small images of the purest gold; four dishes of silver gilt; two palls of silk, with golden clasps; with other silk dresses, and gold clasps, and hangings. To the bishops, priests, deacons, and other clergy, and to the great at Rome, he dis-

^{54 16} Mag. Bib. 88. 55 Bede, p. 295.

⁵⁶ Dugd. Mon. 266. ib. 24. Bede, iii. 11.

⁵⁷ Aldhelm de Laud. Virg. 307. Eddius, 60. 62. 3 Gale Script. 494. Dugd. Mon. 24.

BOOK VII. tributed gold, and among the people small silver. ⁵⁸ A few years afterwards, we learn from the same author, that the English then at Rome presented to the oratory in the pontifical palace, at Frescati, a silver table weighing several pounds. ⁵⁹ In the age before this, we read of gold and silver vessels sent presents to Rome. ⁶⁰

Gold and silver roods, or crosses and crucifixes, are frequently mentioned ⁶¹; also a silver graphium, or pen. ⁶² The crown of the Anglo-Saxon kings is described by the contemporary biographer of Dunstan as made of gold and silver, and set with various gems. ⁶³ They used iron very commonly, and often tin.

THE Anglo-Saxons seem to have been acquainted with the precious stones. In the MSS. Tib. A. 3., twelve sorts of them are thus described:

"The first gem kind is black and green, which are both mingled together, and this is called giaspis. The other is saphyrus; this is like the sun, and in it appear like golden stars. The third is calcedonius; this is like a burning candle. Smaragdus is very green. Sardonix is likest blood. Onichinus is brown and yellow. Sardius is like clear blood. Berillus is like water. Crisoprassus is like a green leek, and green stars seem to shine from it. Topazius is like gold; and carbunculus is like burning fire."

⁵⁸ Anastasius Bibliot. de Vit. Pontif. p. 403. ed Rom. 1718.

⁵⁹ Ibid. 418. ⁴⁰ Bede, iv. c. 1.

⁶¹ Wulf. Will. ap. Hickes Diss. Ep. 54. Ingulf, 9. Dugd. 233.

⁶³ Mag. Bib. xvi. p. 51. 63 MS. Cleop. B. 13.

The odoriferous productions of India and the CHAP. East were known to our ancestors, and highly valued. They frequently formed part of their presents. Boniface sent to an abbess a little frankincense, pepper, and cinnamon 64, to another person some storax and cinnamon. 55 So he received from an archdeacon, cinnamon, pepper, and costus. 65 A deacon at Rome once sent him four ounces of cinnamon, two ounces of costus, two pounds of pepper, and one pound of cozombri. 67

The Anglo-Saxons used the luxury of hot baths. Their use seems to have been common; for a nun is mentioned, who, as an act of voluntary mortification, washed in them only on festivals. Not to go to warm baths, nor to a soft bed, was part of a severe penance. The general practice of this kind of bath may be also inferred, from its being urged by the canons, as a charitable duty, to give to the poor, meat, mund, fire, fodder, bed, bathing, and clothes. But while warm bathing was in this use and estimation, we find cold bathing so little valued as to be mentioned as a penitentiary punishment.

THE washing of the feet in warm water, especially after travelling, is often 72 mentioned.

⁶⁴ Mag. Bib. xvi. p. 50. 65 Ibid. 51. 66 Ibid. 119.

⁶⁷ Ibid. 120. Costus, a kind of shrub growing in Arabia and Persia, and having a root of a pleasant spicy smell.

⁶⁸ Bede, iv. c. 19.

⁶⁹ Wilk. Leg. Angle-Sax. 94.

⁷º Ibid. p. 95. 7º Ibid.

³º Bede, 234, 251, 257.

BOOK It was a part of indispensable hospitality to offer this refreshment to a visitor; and this politeness will lead us to suppose, that shoes and stockings, though worn in social life, were little used in travelling. The custom of walking without these coverings in the country, and of putting them on when the traveller approached towns, has existed among the commonalty in North Britain even in the present reign. Among the gifts of Boniface to an Anglo-Saxon prelate, was a shaggy or woolly present, to dry the feet after being washed. 73 To wash the feet of the poor was one of the acts of penance to be performed by the rich. 74

^{73 16} Mag. Bib. 52. & ib.

⁷⁴ Wilk, Leg. Anglo-Sax, 97.

CHAP. VII.

Their Conviviality and Amusements.

In the ruder states of society, melancholy is CHAP. the prevailing feature of the mind; the stern or dismal countenances of savages are every where remarkable. Usually the prey of want or passion, they are seldom cheerful till they can riot in excess. Their mirth is then violent and transient; and they soon relapse into their habitual gloom.

As the agricultural state advances, and the comforts of civilisation accumulate, provident industry secures regular supplies; the removal of want diminishes care, and introduces leisure; the softer affections then appear with increasing fervour; the human temper is rendered milder; mirth and joy become habitual; mankind are delighted to indulge their social feelings, and a large portion of time is devoted to amusement.

The Anglo-Saxons were in this happy state of social improvement; they loved the pleasures of the table, but they had the wisdom to unite with them more intellectual diversions. At their cheerful meetings it was the practice for all to sing in turn; and Bede mentions an instance in which, for this purpose, the harp was sent

BOOK round. The musicians of the day, the wild flowers of their poetry, and the ludicrous jokes and tricks of their buffas, were such essential additions to their conviviality, that the council of Cloveshoe, which thought that more solemn manners were better suited to the ecclesiastic. forbad the monks to suffer their mansions to be the receptacle of the "sportive arts, that is, of poets, harpers, musicians, and buffoons." 2 A previous council, aiming to produce the same effect, had decreed, that no ecclesiastic should have harpers, or any music, nor should permit any jokes or plays in their presence.3 In Edgar's speech on the expulsion of the clergy, the histriones, or gleemen, are noticed as frequenting the monasteries: "There are the dice, there are dancing and singing, even to the very middle of the night." 4 Among the canons made in the same king's reign, a priest was forbidden to be an eala-scop, or an ale-poet, or to any wise gliwige, or play the gleeman with himself, or with others. 5 Strutt has given some drawings of the Saxon gleeman from some ancient MSS. I will add his description of the 6 figures.

> "We there see a man throwing three balls and three knives alternately into the air, and catching them one by one as they fall, but returning them again in rotation. To

^{*} Bede, lib. iv. p. 170.

³ Spel. Concil. 159.

³ Spel. Concil. 256.

⁴ Ethel. Ab. Riev. p. 360. 5 Spel. Concil. 455.

⁶ Strutt's Sports and Pastimes, 132, 133. This book was the last publication of this worthy and industrious man.

give the greater appearance of difficulty to this part, it is CHAP. accompanied with the music of an instrument resembling the modern violin. It is necessary to add, that these two figures, as well as those dancing, previously mentioned, form a part only of two larger paintings, which, in their original state, are placed as frontispieces to the Psalms of David; in both, the artists have represented that monarch seated upon his throne, in the act of playing upon the harp or lyre, and surrounded by the masters of sacred music. In addition to the four figures upon the middle of the plate, and exclusive of the king, there are four more, all of them instrumental performers; one playing upon the horn, another upon the trumpet, and the other two upon a kind of tabor or drum, which, however, is beaten with a single drum-stick. The manuscript in which this illumination is preserved, was written as early as the eighth century. The second painting, which is more modern than the former by two full centuries, contains four figures besides the royal psalmist: the two not engraved are musicians; the one is blowing a long trumpet, supported by a staff he holds in his left hand, and the other is winding a crooked horn. In a short prologue immediately preceding the Psalms, we read as follows: David, filius Jesse, in regno suo quatuor elegit qui Psalmos fecerunt, id est Asaph, Æman, Æthan, et Iduthan; which may be thus translated literally: David, the son of Jesse, in his reign, elected four persons who composed psalms, that is to say, Asaph, Æman, Æthan, and Iduthan. In the painting, these four names are separately appropriated, one to each of the four personages there represented. The player upon the violin is called Iduthan, and Æthan is tossing up the knives and balls."7

Another passage may be cited from the same industrious and worthy author.

" One part of the gleeman's profession, as early as the tenth century, was teaching animals to dance, to tumble, and to put themselves into variety of attitudes at the command of their masters. Upon the twenty-second plate we

⁷ Strutt's Sports and Pastimes, p. 134.

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see the curious though rude delineation, being little more than an outline, which exhibits a specimen of this pastime. The principal joculator appears in the front, holding a knotted switch in one hand, and a line attached to the bear in the other; the animal is lying down in obedience to his command; and behind them are two more figures, the one playing upon two flutes or flageolets, and elevating his left leg while he stands upon his right, supported by a staff that passes under his arm-pit; the other dancing. This performance takes place upon an eminence resembling a stage, made with earth; and in the original a vast concourse are standing round it in a semicircle as spectators of the sport. but they are so exceedingly ill-drawn, and withal so indistinct, that I did not think it worth the pains to copy them. The dancing, if I may so call it, of the flute-player, is repeated twice in the same manuscript. I have thence selected two other figures, and placed them upon the seventeenth plate, where we see a youth playing upon a harp with only four strings, and apparently singing at the same time, while an elderly man is performing the part of a buffoon, or posture-master, holding up one of his legs, and hopping upon the other to the music."8

In a Latin MS. of Prudentius, with Saxon notes, there is a drawing which seems to represent a sort of military dance exhibited for public amusement.

"Two men equipped in martial habits, and each of them armed with a sword and shield, are engaged in a combat; the performance is enlivened by the sound of a horn; the

s Strutt's Sports and Pastimes, p. 134. He adds in a note, that "both these drawings occur in a MS. Psalter, written in Latin, and apparently about the middle of the tenth century. It contains many drawings, all of them exceedingly rude, and most of them merely outlines. It is preserved in the Harleian library, and marked 603." His twenty-second plate is in the 182d page of his work; his seventeenth plate in p. 132, to which we refer the reader.

musician acts in a double capacity, and is, together with a C H A P. female assistant, dancing round them to the cadence of the music, and probably the actions of the combatants were also regulated by the same measure."9

WE may remark, that the word commonly used in Anglo-Saxon to express dancing, is the verb zumbian. The Anglo-Saxon version of the Gospels mentions that the daughter of Herodias zumbuse before Herod; and the Anglo-Saxon word for dancer is tumbene. It is probable that their mode of dancing included much tumbling.

WE may infer that bear-baiting was an amusement of some importance to our ancestors, as it is stated in Doomsday-book, among the annual payments from Norwich, that it should provide one bear, and six dogs for the bear.

It was in the character of a gleeman, or, as it was expressed in the Latin term, joculator, that Alfred visited the Danish encampment. That these persons were not only valued, but well rewarded in their day, we learn from a curious fact: Edmund, the son of Ethelred, gave a villa to his gleeman, or joculator, whose name was Hitard. This gleeman, in the decline of life, went on a visit of devotion to Rome, and previous to his journey gave the land to the church at Canterbury.10 In Doomsday-book, Berdic, a joculator of the king, is stated to have possessed three villas in Gloucestershire.

⁹ Strutt's Sports and Pastimes, p. 166. His plate of it is p. 162. The MS. is in the Cotton Lib. Cleop. C. 8.

Dugdale Mon. p. 21.



The Anglo-Saxons used a game at hazard, which they called tæpl. The tæpl-ptan, or tæpl-ptone, was the die. The canons of Edgar forbid priests to be tæplepe, or players at the "tæpl. There is a passage which may be noticed on this subject concerning Canute: A bishop having made a lucrative bargain with a drunken Dane, rode in the night to the king to borrow money to fulfil his contract: it says, "he found the king alleviating the tedium of a long night by the play of tesserarum, or scaccorum ";" he was successful in his application. Whether this play was the tæpl, or any other game more resembling chess, is not clear.

One of their principal diversions was hunting. This is frequently mentioned. A king is exhibited by Bede as standing at the fire with his attendants, and warming himself after '3 hunting. Alfred is praised by his friend Asser for his incomparable skill and assiduity in the arts of the chase. He is stated to have gone as far as Cornwall to enjoy it. The hunt of Edmund, the grandson of Alfred, at Ceoddri, is thus described by a contemporary:

"When they reached the woods, they took various directions among the woody avenues; and lo, from the varied noise of the horns and the barking of the dogs, many stags began to fly about. From these, the king, with his pack of hounds, selected one for his own hunting, and pur-

³³ Spelm. Coneil. p. 455.

¹² Hist. Rames. 3 Gale, p. 442. 13 Bede, iii. 14.

³⁴ Asser, p. 16. ¹⁵ Ibid. p. 40.

sued it long through devious ways with great agility on his horse, and with the dogs following. In the vicinity of Ceoddri were several abrupt and lofty precipices hanging over profound declivities. To one of these the stag came in his flight, and dashed himself down the immense depth with headlong ruin, all the dogs following and perishing with him. The king, pursuing the animal and the hounds with equal energy, was rushing onwards to the precipice; he saw his danger, and struggled violently to stop his courser; the horse disobeyed awhile his rein: he gave up the hope of life, he recommended himself to God and his saint, and was carried to the very brink of destruction before the speed of the animal could be checked. The horse's feet were trembling on the last turf of the precipice, when he stopped." 16

In the Saxon dialogues above-mentioned, we have this conversation on hunting: "I am a hunter to one of the kings."- 'How do you exercise your art?' "I spread my nets, and set them in a fit place, and instruct my hounds to pursue the wild deer till they come to the nets unexpectedly, and so are entangled, and I slay them in the nets." - 'Cannot you hunt without nets?' "Yes, with swift hounds I follow the wild deer." - 'What wild deer do you chiefly take?' "Harts, boars, and reindeer (rana), and goats, and sometimes hares." - ' Did you hunt to-day?' " No, because it was Sunday, but yesterday I did. I took two harts and one boar." - 'How?" "The harts in nets, the boar I slew." - ' How dared you slay him?' "The hounds drove him to me, and I, standing opposite, pierced him."- 'You

CHAP. VII.

²⁶ Life of Dunstan. Cott. MSS. Cleop. B. 13.

VII.

BOOK was bold.' "A hunter should not be fearful, because various wild deer live in the woods."-What do you do with your hunting?" "I give the king what I take, because I am his huntsman."- 'What does he give thee?' "He clothes me well, and feeds me, and sometimes gives me a horse or a bracelet, that I may follow my art more lustily."

> WE have a little information about the royal hunting in Doomsday-book. When the king went to Shrewsbury to hunt, the most respectable burghers who had horses, served as his guard, with arms; and the sheriff sent thirtysix men on foot, to be stationed at the hunt while the king was there. In Hereford, every house sent a man, to be stationed in the wood whenever the king hunted.

> Among the drawings in the Saxon calendar in the Cotton library, Tib. B. 5. the month of September represents a boar-hunt: a wood appears, containing boars; a man is on foot with a spear, another appears with a horn slung and applied to his mouth; he has also a spear, and dogs are following.

> HUNTING was forbidden by Canute on a Sunday.17 Every man was allowed to hunt in the woods, and in the fields that were his own, but not to interfere with the king's hunting.18

> HAWKS and falcons were also favourite subjects of amusement, and valuable presents in

those days, when, the country being much over- CHAP. run with wood, every species of the feathered race must have abounded. A king of Kent begged of a friend abroad two falcons of such skill and courage as to attack cranes willingly, and, seizing them, to throw them to the ground. He says, he makes this request because there were few hawks of that kind in Kent who produced good offspring, and who could be made agile and courageous enough in this art of warfare. 19 Our Boniface sent, among some other presents, a hawk and two falcons to a 20 friend; and we may infer the common use of the diversion from his forbidding his monks to hunt in the woods with dogs, and from having hawks and falcons.21 An Anglo-Saxon, by his will, gives two hawks (harocar), and all his staghounds (heabon hunbar), to his natural 22 lord. The sportsmen in the train of the great were so onerous on lands, as to make the exemption of their visit a valuable privilege. Hence a king liberates some lands from those who carry with them hawks or falcons, horses or dogs. 23 The Saxon calendar, in its drawings, represents hawking in the month of October.

HUNTING and hawking were for many ages favourite diversions in this island. In the tapestry of Bayeux, Harold appears with his hawk upon his hand. Ethelstan made North Wales furnish

¹⁹ Mag. Bib. xvi. p. 65. ²⁰ Ibid. p. 53.

²² Ibid. p. 94. ²² Thorpe's Reg. Roff. p. 24.

²³ Cott. MS. Claud. C. 9. p. 104.

BOOK VII. him with as many dogs as he chose, "whose scent-pursuing noses might explore the haunts and coverts of the deer;" and he also exacted birds, "who knew how to hunt others along the atmosphere." 24 A nobleman is mentioned, who frequented his estates near woods and marshes, because it was convenient for hunting and hawking.25 This was the fashion of the times; and even the meek and impassive Edward the Confessor is exhibited as pursuing his deer when he was thwarted by a rustic whom he desired to punish, but that his simple mind knew not that he had the power. 26 The chief delights of this king were, the coursing of swift hounds, whose clamour during the sport he was eager to cheer, and the flights of birds whose nature it is to pursue their kindred prey. Every day, after his morning devotions, he indulged in these exercises. 27

The Saxon dialogues thus speak of the fowler: 'How do you deceive fowls?' "Many ways; sometimes with nets, sometimes with gins, sometimes with lime, sometimes whistling, sometimes with hawks, sometimes with traps."—'Have you a hawk?' "I have."—'Can you tame them?' "I can; what use would they be to me, if I could not tame them?"—'Give me a hawk.' "I will give it willingly, if you will give me a swift hound; which hawk will you

²⁴ Malmsb. lib. ii. p. 50.

²⁵ Hist. Ram. 3 Gale Scrip. p. 404.

²⁶ Malmsb. lib. ii. c. 13. p. 79. ²⁷ Ibid. p. 91.

have, the greater or the less?"—' The greater; CHAP. how do you feed them?' "They feed themselves and me in winter, and in spring I let them fly to the woods. I take for myself young ones in harvest, and tame them."—' And why do you let them fly from you when tamed?' "Because I will not feed them in summer, as they eat too much."—' But many feed and keep them tame through the summer, that they may again have them ready.' "So they do, but I will not have that trouble about them, as I can take many others." 28

28 Cotton MS. Tib. A. 3.

CHAP. VIII.

Their Marriages.

TT is well known that the female sex were BOOK much more highly valued, and more respectfully treated, by the barbarous Gothic nations, than by the more polished states of the East. Among the Anglo-Saxons, they occupied the same important and independent rank in society which they now enjoy. They were allowed to possess, to inherit, and to transmit landed property; they shared in all the social festivities; they were present at the witena gemot and the shire gemot; they were permitted to sue and be sued in the courts of justice; their persons, their safety, their liberty, and their property, were protected by express laws; and they possessed all that sweet influence which, while the human heart is responsive to the touch of love, they will ever retain in those countries which have the wisdom and the urbanity to treat them as equal, intelligent, and independent beings.

THE earliest institutions respecting the Anglo-Saxon marriages occur in the laws of Ethelbert. According to these, a man might purchase a woman, if the agreement was made without

be taken back to her house, and his money was to be restored to him. It was also enjoined, that if a wife brought forth children alive, and survived her husband, she was to have half his property. She was allowed the same privilege, if she chose, to live with her children; but if she was childless, his paternal relations were to have his possessions, and the morgen-gift.

The customary forms attendant upon their marriage contracts are more clearly displayed to us in the laws of Edmund: the consent of the lady and her friends was to be first obtained: the bridegroom was then to give his promise, and his pledge, to the person who spoke for her, that he desired her, that he might keep her, according to the law of God, as a man ought to keep his wife. Nor was this promise trusted to his own honour or interest: the female sex were so much under the protection of the law, that the bridegroom was compelled to produce friends who gave their security for his due observance of his covenant.

THE parties being thus betrothed, the next

Wilk. Leg. Sax. p.7.

² The Saxon word is bpy5-zuma. Luma means a man, which we have perverted into groom; bpy5 implies marriage. The Welsh for marriage is priodas; priodvab is a bridegroom; priodi, to marry; all these in composition change into an initial b. No one can suspect that such a term as this can by either nation have been derived from the other. But the Welsh has preserved the rationale of the word, which implies appropriation, or proprietorship.

BOOK step was to settle to whom the foster lean, the money requisite for the nourishing the children, should be applied. The bridegroom was then required to pledge himself to this, and his friends became responsible for him.

> This matter being arranged, he was then to signify what he meant to give her for choosing to be his wife, and what he should give her in case she survived him. I consider the first gift to be a designation of his intended morgen gift. This was the present which the Anglo-Saxon wives received from their husbands on the day after their nuptials, as it is expressed in the law. It seems to have been intended as a compliment to the ladies for honouring a suitor with their preference, and for submitting to the duties of wedlock. The law adds, that, if it be so agreed, it is right that she should halve the property, or have the whole if they had children together, unless she chose again another husband. This was an improvement on the ancient law, which, in the event of no issue, had directed the morgen gift to be returned.

> THE bridegroom was then required to confirm with his pledge all that he had promised, and his friends were to become responsible for its due performance.

> THESE preliminaries being settled, they proceeded to the marriage. Her relations then took and wedded her to wife, and to a right life, with him who desired her; and the person appointed to keep the pledges that had been

given, took the security for them. For the CHAP. more complete assurance of the lady's personal safety and comfort, in those days wherein a multiplicity of jurisdictions gave often impunity to crime, the friends who took the pledges were authorized to become guarantee to her, that if her husband carried her into another thane's land, he would do her no injury; and that, if she did wrong, they would be ready to answer the compensation, if she had nothing from which she could pay it.

The law proceeds to direct, that the masspriest should be present at the marriage, and should consecrate their union with the divine blessing to every happiness and ³ prosperity. There is an article in one of the collections of ecclesiastical canons, "How man shall bless the bridegroom and the bride." ⁴

The Anglo-Saxon remains will furnish us with some illustrations of the pecuniary contracts which attended their marriages. We will give one document at length, as it may be called an Anglo-Saxon lady's marriage-settlement.

"There appears in this writing the compact which Wulfric and the archbishop made when he obtained the archbishop's sister for his wife. It is, that he promised her the land at Ealretune and at Rebbedforda for her life, and promised her the land at Cnihte-wica; that he would obtain it for her for the lives of three men from the monastery at Wincelcumbe; and he gave her the land at Eanulfin-tune to give and to grant to those that were dearest to her during life, and after

³ Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 75, 76.

MS. CCC, Cantab. S. xii. c. 71.

BOOK her life to those that were dearest to her; and he promised her fifty mances of gold, and thirty men and thirty horses. Now of this were to witness Wulfstan the archbishop, and Leofwin the ealdorman, and Æthelstan bishop, and Ælford abbot, and Briteh monk, and many good men in addition to them, both ecclesiastics and laymen, that this compact was thus made. Now of this compact there are two writings; one with the archbishop at Wigere ceaster, and another with Æthelstan, the bishop at Herford."5

WITHOUT deviating into an exposition of the customs of other nations as to the morgen 6 gift, we will state a few circumstances concerning it from our own documents. It is frequently mentioned in ladies' wills: thus Wynfleda, bequeathing some land at Faccancumb, calls it her morgen gifu.7 So Elfleda, in her will, says, "Rettendun that was my morgen gyfu 8;" and Elfhelm, in his will, has this passage: " And I declare what I gave to my wife for her morgen give; that is, Beadewan, and Burge stede, and Strætford, and the three hides at Hean-healem." The same testator notices an additional present that he had made his wife on her nuptials: " And I gave to her when we two first came together, the two hides at Wilburgeham, and at Hrægenan,

⁵ This may be seen in Wanley's Catalogue, p. 302., and Hickes's Diss. Ep. 76. Wulstan died 1023.

⁶ Henry's observations on the marriage of our ancestors are very discursive, and relate rather to other nations than to the Anglo-Saxons. See his vol. iii. p. 393., &c. The reader of Henry will frequently have occasion to recollect this.

⁷ See her will. Hickes's Pref. xxii.

See Lye, Sax. Dict. voc. morgen gife.

and that thereto lieth." 9 The morgen gift was CHAP. therefore a settlement on the lady very similar to a modern jointure. It was bargained for before marriage, but was not actually vested in the wife till afterwards. Our conception of the thing will be probably simplified and assisted by recollecting the language of our modern settlements. The land or property conveyed by them is given in trust for the person who grants it "until the said marriage shall take effect; and from and immediately after the solemnization thereof," it is then granted to the uses agreed upon. So the morgen gift was settled before the nuptials, but was not actually given away until the morning afterwards, or until the marriage was completed.

Nothing could be more calculated to produce a very striking dissimilarity, between the Gothic nations and the Oriental states, than this exaltation of the female sex to that honour, consequence, and independence, which European laws studied to uphold. As the education of youth will always rest principally with women, in the most ductile part of life, it is of the greatest importance that the fair sex should possess high estimation in society; and nothing could more certainly tend to perpetuate this feeling, than the privilege of possessing property in their own right, and at their own disposal.

⁶ See his will at length, from Mr. Astle's collection, in the second appendix to the Saxon Dictionary.

BOOK VII.

THAT the Anglo-Saxon ladies both inherited and disposed of property as they pleased, appears from many instances: a wife is mentioned who devised land by her will, with the consent of her husband in his life-time. ' We read also of land which a wife had sold in her husband's life." We frequently find wives the parties to a sale of land 12; and still oftener we read of estates given to women, or devised by men of affluence to their wives. 13 Widows selling property is also a common '4 occurrence; so is the incident of women devising it. 15 That they inherited land is also clear, for a case is mentioned wherein, there being no male heir, the estate went to a female. 16 Women appear as tenants in capite in Doomsday.

THERE are many instances of land being granted to both husband and wife.¹⁷ The queens frequently join in the charters with the kings ¹⁸; and it is once mentioned, that a widow and the heirs were sued for her husband's

¹⁰ Hist. Ram. 8 Gale, 460.

¹¹ Ibid. 466.

^{**} Ibid. 472. 474, 475. 408.

¹³ 3 Gale, 441. 407, 408.; and see the wills of Ælfred Dux, and of Elfhelm, in Sax. Dict. App. 2. and several Saxon grants.

¹⁴ 3 Gale, 468.

¹⁵ Ibid. 471. See the charta of Eadgifa in Sax. Dict. App. and of Wynfleda ap. Hickes.

¹⁶ Ingulf, p. 39.

²⁷ As in Claud. B.6. p. 38. So Offa gives land to his minister and his sister. Astle, No. 7. ib. 8.

Astle's Charters, 48.; and Heming, p. 9., &c.

debts. 19 Indeed, the instances of women having CHAP. property transferred to them, and also of their, transmitting it to others, surround us on all sides. To name only a few: a king's mother gave five hides to a noble matron, which she gave to a monastery.20 When a bishop had bought some lands of an husband and a wife. he fixed a day when she should come and surrender them, because she had the greater right to the land by a former husband.21 A mother bequeathed property to two of her daughters; and to her third daughter, Leosware, she gave an estate at Weddreringesete, on the reproachful condition, that she should keep herself chaste, or marry, that she and her progeny might not be branded with the infamy of the contagion of prostitution. 32

In the oldest Anglo-Saxon law, widows were protected by an express regulation. Four ranks are mentioned: an eorlcund's widow, another sort, a third and fourth sort. Their tranquillity invaded was to be punished by fines adapted to their quality, as fifty shillings, twenty, twelve, and six shillings.²³

THEY were also guarded from personal violence. If any took a widow without her consent, he was to be fined a double mulct.²⁴ It

²⁹ 3 Gale, 468. ²⁰ Ibid. 481. ²¹ Ibid. 472.

²² Ibid. 507. So Alfred in his will gives estates to his three daughters, and also money.

²³ Wilk. Leg. Sax. 7.

BOOK was also expressly forbidden to any one to marry a woman if she was unwilling. 25

> THE morgen gift was not left optional to the husband to give or withhold after the marriage. One of the laws of Ina expressly provide, that if a man bargained for a woman, and the gyft was not duly forthcoming, he should actually pay the money, and also a penalty and a compensation to her sureties for breaking his 26 troth. The morgen gift was also the means by which they punished widows who married too early. Twelve months was the legal term prescribed for widowhood. By Ethelred's law, every widow who kept herself in the peace of God and of the king, and who remained twelve months without a husband, might choose afterwards as she pleased.27 But by a subsequent law, if she married within the year, she lost her morgen gift, and all the property which she derived from her first husband. 48

> THESE pecuniary bargains which were made on the Anglo-Saxon marriages do not breathe much of the spirit of affectionate romance. The men, however, cannot be called mercenary suitors, as they appear to have been the paymasters. These contracts give occasion to the Saxon legislators to express the fact of treating for a marriage by the terms of buying a wife. Hence our oldest law says, if a man buys a maiden, the bargain shall stand if there be no

²⁵ Wilk. Leg. Sax. 145.

²⁶ Ibid. 20. 27 Ibid, 109, 122.

²⁸ Ibid. 145.

deceit; otherwise, she should be restored to her CHAP. home, and his money shall be returned to 29 him. So, in the penalty before mentioned annexed to the non-payment of the morgen gift, the expression used is, if a man buys a wife. 30 In this kind of marriage-bargains it was a necessary protection extended to the lover, that the same law which forbade the compelling a woman to marry the man she disliked, also, as an impartial counterpart of justice, directed that a man should not be forced to give his money, unless he was desirous to bestow it of his own free 31 will. There is another passage which tends to express, that marriage was considered as the purchase of the lady. " If a freeman cohabit with the wife of a freeman, he must pay the were, and obtain another woman with his own money, and lead her to the other." 32 In this point we have greatly improved on the customs, or at least the language of our ancestors. Pecuniary considerations and arrangements are still important formulas preceding marriages; but ladies frequently bring their husband property, instead of receiving it; and if they do not, their affection and attentions are his dearest treasure. They are not now either bought or sold, unless where interest counterfeits affection.

AFTER adding that marriages were forbidden within certain degrees of consanguinity 33, we

^{. 39} Wilk. Leg. Sax. 7.

³º Ibid, 19. 31 Ibid. 145.

³³ Ibid. 4.

³³ Ibid. 52, 129;

BOOK have only the unpleasing task remaining of mentioning the penalties which were attached to the violation of female chastity.

> IF a slave committed a rape on a female slave, he was punished with a corporal mutilation. If any one compelled an immature maiden, he was to abide the same punishment. Whoever violated a ceorl's wife, was to pay him five shillings, and be fined sixty shillings. 34

> For adultery with the wife of a twelve hundred man, the offender was to pay one hundred and twenty shillings; and one hundred shillings for the wife of a six hundred man, and forty shillings for a ceorl's wife. This might be paid in live property, and no man might sell another for it. For the degrees of intimacy with a ceorl's wife, which are specified, various fines were exacted. 35

> The earliest Saxon laws were attentive to this vice: in those of Ethelred fifty shillings were the appointed penalty for intimacy with the king's maiden, half that sum with his grinding servant, and twelve shillings with another, or with an earl's cup-bearer. The chastity of a ceorl's attendant was guarded by six shillings, and of inferior servants by the diminished penalty of fifty and thirty scættas. 36

> By the same laws, for a rape on a servile woman, the offender was to pay her owner fifty shillings, and then to buy her at the will of her

owner. If she was pregnant, he was to pay CHAP. thirty-five shillings, and fifteen shillings to the king, and twenty shillings if betrothed to another, 37

THEIR high estimation and rigorous exaction of female virtue, even among the servile, is strongly implied in this passage of one of Bede's works:

In the courts of princes there are certain men and women moving continually in more splendid vestments, and retaining a greater familiarity with their lord and lady. There it is studiously provided, that none of the women there who are in an enslaved state should remain with any stain of unchastity; but if by chance she should turn to the eyes of men with an immodest aspect, she is immediately chided with severity. There some are deputed to the interior, some to the exterior offices, all of whom carefully observe the duties committed to them, that they may claim nothing but what is so entrusted. V. 8. p. 1067.

³⁷ Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 7.

CHAP. IX.

Classes and Condition of Society.

BOOK

EVERY man in the Anglo-Saxon society beneath the cyning and his family was in one of these classes. He was either in high estimation from his birth; or he was in a state of dignity from office, or from property; or he was a free-man; or a freed-man; or he was in one of the servile classes. Thus inequality was as much the character of the Anglo-Saxon society as of our own superior civilisation.

The inequality of society is the source of perpetual discontent, both against government and Providence; and yet from this inequality have arisen all the comforts that cause us to be displeased with it. In natural birth, in natural powers, in natural merit, in the womb and in the grave, we are all equal; but it is in nature an equality of destitution and want; of capability and desire; of the necessity of exertion; of destiny and hope. Mankind began their mortal race alike both in privation and in power. Nature extended her riches impartially before all. She favoured neither of her first-born sons.

The materials of all the conveniences of life, CHAP. which civilisation has since acquired, were present to every eye, and attainable by every hand.

But the very freedom of mind and action with which nature has blessed mankind, and the impulse of the privations amid which we originated, soon terminated this equality of want, and began the acquisition of comforts and abundance. No man has from nature any advantages above his fellows: no one comes into life with four arms, or twenty eyes: none leap into birth armed and full-formed Minervas; but all being free to use their capabilities as they please, the exertion of this liberty produced inevitable inequality in anterior times, as in every subsequent age. It is not merely that the industrious will amass more conveniences than the idle, the provident more than the careless, the economist than the profuse; but the different tastes and feelings of men throw them into different social positions both of rank and property. The hunter and the fowler will not raise stores of corn like the husbandman, nor can he acquire the riches and commodities of the merchant. The warrior. abandoning the paths which the preceding characters prefer, cannot therefore, of himself, obtain the comforts which they value and pursue, but gains an estimation and consequence in the social talk, which gratifies him more than the shiploads of foreign commerce, or the replenished granaries of the agriculturist. The artisan, at-

BOOK tached to his humble but cherished tranquillity, neither feels nor envies the dangerous honours of the soldier, nor the risks and sufferings of the trading navigator. Thus mankind, obeying the tendency of their various dispositions, fill social life with inequality, and, by pursuing such diversified roads, are for ever multiplying the conveniences and enjoyments of life, though the dissimilar acquisition of these, from the exertion of individual liberty of will and action, is perpetually augmenting the inequality complained of. The truth is, that, by these various pursuits, the comforts of every class, even of the lowest, are inconceivably increased. Our common farmers now fare better than the thegns and knights of the Anglo-Saxon days; and the cottages of our day-labourers have many more conveniences, and their life fewer privations, than most of the Anglo-Saxon classes of society enjoyed below the baron, the thegn, and the knight, and some even which the latter of these had not: to instance only one circumstance—the comforts of a chimney and its cleanliness. Most of our early ancestors lived at home amid smoke and dirt, with one of which, at least, life would, to the poorest among us, seem intolerable; yet Alcuin, the Anglo-Saxon abbot who was reproached for having ten thousand slaves or vassal peasantry at his command, lived in an habitation sordid with smoke, and affecting his eyes, which he refused to quit for the gilded

arched roofs of Italy, the remains of Roman CHAP. luxury, to which the emperor invited him.

It is the glory of civilised life, for the more successful possessor of its advantages to diffuse them, from his own stores, as far as he is able, wherever he observes them to be painfully deficient.

THERE was certainly among our Anglo-Saxon Dignity ancestors a personal distinction arising from birth. Individuals are described in these times as noble by descent.2 The expression ethelboren, or noble born, occurs several times, even in the laws. 3 A very forcible passage on this subject appears in the life of St. Guthlac: "There was a noble (ethela) man in the high nation of the Mercians; he was of the oldest race, and the noblest (æthelstan) that was named Iclingas." 4 The sense of this cannot be mistaken: a family is expressly distinguished from the rest by an appropriated name "Iclingas." We may recollect here that Iornandes says of the Goths, that they had a noble race called the Balthæ, from whence Alaric sprung. 5 In the

^{*} He writes to the emperor, who had urged him to visit Rome: "You blame me for preferring the houses of Tours, sordid with smoke, to the gilded arches of the Romans; I would say, with your leave, that iron (swords) hurts the eyes more than smoke. Contented with the smoky houses, I remain here in peace." Ep. xiii. p. 1507.

³ 3 Gale Script, 395. 417, 418.

³ MS. Vesp. D. 14. p. 36. 120, and Wilk. Leg. Sax. 37.

^{*} MS. Vesp. D. 21. p. 19.

See vol. i. of this work.

BOOK canons of Edgar another decisive passage attests. that superiority of birth was felt to convey superior consequence; for it was found necessary to require, "that no forth-boren priest despise one that is less born, because, if men think rightly, all men are of one origin." 6 No peculiar titles, as with us, seem to have distinguished the nobly born; they were rather marked out to their fellows by that name of the family which had become illustrious, as the Fabii and Cornelii of the Romans. Their title was formed by the addition of ing to the name of the ancestor whose fame produced their glory. Thus from Uffa his posterity was called Uffingas.7 So Beowulf, the hero of an Anglo-Saxon poem, was one of the Scyldingas.

> Beowulf was illustrious: The fruit wide sprang Of the posterity of the Scylde.

Then was in the burghs Beowulf, the Scyldinga, The dear king of his people.

With them the Scyld Departed to the ship, While many were prone to go In the path of their lord. They him then bore To the journey of the ocean

⁶ Wilk. Leg. Sax. 83.

⁷ Polych. Higd. 3 Gale, p. 224.

As his companions, He himself commanded; Whence with words he governed The Scyldinga of battle.³ CHAP.

THE birth that was thought illustrious conferred personal honour, but no political rank or power. No title was attached to it which descended by heirship and gave a perpetuity of political privileges. That was a later improvement. In theoretical reasoning, and in the eye of religion, the distinction of birth seems to be an unjust prejudice; we have all, as our Great Alfred and Boetius sang, one common ancestor. and the same Creator, protector, and judge: but the morality and merit of society is the product of very complicated and diversified motives. and is never so superabundant as to suffer uninjured the loss of any one of its incentives and supports. The fame of an applauded ancestor has stimulated many to perform noble actions, or to preserve an honourable character, and will continue so to operate while human nature exists. It creates a sentiment of honour, a dread of disgrace, an useful pride of name, which, though not universally efficient, will frequently check the vicious propensities of passion or selfishness, when reason or religion has exhorted in vain. The distinction of birth may be therefore added to the exaltation of the female sex. as another of those peculiarities which have

^{*} MS. Cott. Lib. Vit. A. 15. p, 129, 130.

BOOK tended to extract from the barbarism of the VII. Gothic nations a far nobler character than any that the rich climates of the East could rear.

By property;

THAT there was a nobility from landed property, distinct from that of birth, attainable by every one, and possessing (what noble birth had not of itself) political rank and immunities, is clear, from several passages. It is mentioned in the laws, as an incentive to proper actions, that through God's gift a servile thræl may become a thane, and a ceorl an eorl, just as a singer may become a priest, and a bocere (a writer) a bishop.9 In the time of Ethelstan it is expressly declared, that if a ceorl have the full proprietorship of five hides of his own land, a church, and kitchen, a bell-house, a burhgateseat, and an appropriate office in the king's hall, he shall thenceforth be a thegn, or thane, by right. 10 The same laws provide that a thegn may arrive at the dignity of an eorl, and that a massere, or merchant, who went three times over sea with his own craft, might become a thegn." But the most curious passage on this subject is that which attests, that without the possession of a certain quantity of landed property, the dignity of sitting in the witena-gemot could not be enjoyed, not even though the person was noble already. An abbot of Ely had a brother who was courting the daughter of a

⁹ Wilk. Leg. Sax. 112.

^{2. 10} Ibid. 70.

Ibid.

great man, but the lady refused him, because, CHAP. although noble, he had not the lordship of forty hides, and therefore could not be numbered among the process or witena. To enable him to gratify his love and her ambition, the abbot conveyed to him certain lands belonging to his monastery. The nuptials took place, and the fraud was for some time undiscovered. 12

The principle of distinguishing men by their property is also established in the laws. Thus we read of twyhyndum, of syxhyndum, and of twelfhyndum men. ¹³ A twyhynde man was level in his were with a ceorl ¹⁴, and a twelfhynde with a thegn ¹⁵; and yet Canute calls both these classes his thegns. ¹⁶ But though property might confer distinction, yet it was the possession of landed property which raised a man to those titles which might be called ennobling. Hence it is mentioned, that though a ceorl should attain to a helmet, mail, and a goldhilted sword, yet if he had no land he must still remain a ceorl. ¹⁷

THE species of nobility which was gained by official dignities appears to have appertained to the ealdorman, the eorl, the heretoch, and the

¹² Hist. Eliens. 3 Gale, Scrip. 513.

¹³ Wilk. Leg. Sax. 25. 33.

¹⁴ Ibid. 64., and 3 Gale, 423.

^{*5} Leg. Sax. 16.

[&]quot;I Cnut, king, greet Lyfing, archbishop; and Æthelwine, shire-man, and all my thegns, twelf-hynde and twi-hynde friendlily." Wanley, Cott. MSS. p. 181.

¹⁷ Leg. Sax. 71.

BOOK thegn, when he was a king's thegn. A certain portion of rank was also conceded to the gerefa and the scir-reve. There was a still inferior degree of consequence derived from being ealdor of an hundred, and such-like minor offices, which the laws sometimes recognise.18

By office.

THE dignity from office conferred some beneficial distinction on the family of the person possessing it; for the laws speak of an eorlcunde widow, and defend her by exacting compensations, for wrongs committed against her, much superior to those of other women. 19

Official dignities were conferred by the king, and were liable to be taken away by him on illegal conduct. This is the language with which, according to Asser, Alfred addressed his great men: ". I wonder at your audacity, that by the gift of God, and by my gift, you have assumed the ministry and the degree of the wise men, and yet have neglected the study and labour of wisdom. Therefore I command, either that you lay aside the ministry of earthly power which you enjoy, or that you study wisdom more attentively." 20 In the laws we find an ealdorman threatened with the loss of his shire, unless the king pardon him, for conniving at the escape of a thief. 21 So a thegn is threatened with the perpetual loss of his thegaship for an unjust judgment, unless he prove by oath

As in the ealdor of the hundred. Leg. Sax. 81.

²⁰ Asser, Vit. Ælf. 71. 19 Ibid. 7.

Leges Inæ, p. 20.

that he knew not how to give a better decision. CHAP. But the king in this case also had the option of restoring him. ²² In the same manner the gerefas are menaced with the deprivation of their post of honour, on committing the offences described in the law. ²³ The exact nature and duties of these dignified officers will be considered more minutely under the head of government. ²⁴

THE rest of the Anglo-Saxon society, consisted of three descriptions of men, the free, the freed, and the servile.

In talking of the Anglo-Saxon freemen, we Freemen. must not let our minds expatiate on an ideal character which eloquence and hope have invested with charms almost magical. No utopian state, no paradise of such a pure republic as

22 Leges Edgari, p. 78., et Cnuti, p. 135.

²³ Leg. Sax. 69.

²⁴ A curious privilege allowed to the great may be here noticed. This was, that his friends might do penance for him. The laws of Edgar state that "a mighty man, if rich in friends, may thus with their aid lighten his penance." He was first to make his confession, and begin his penance with much groaning. "Let him then lay aside his arms and his idle apparel, and put on hair-cloth, and take a staff in his hand, and go barefoot, and not enter a bed, but lie in his court-yard." If this penance was imposed for seven years, he might take to his aid twelve men, and fast three days on bread, green herbs, and water. He might then get seven times one hundred and twenty men, whomsoever he could, who should all fast three days, and thus make up as many days of penance as there are days in seven years, p. 97. Thus a penance of seven years might be got through in a week.

BOOK reason can conceive, but as human nature can neither establish nor support, is about to shine around us when we describe the Anglo-Saxon freeman. A freeman among our ancestors was not that dignified independent being, "lord of the lion heart and eagle eye," which our poets fancy under this appellation; he was rather an Anglo-Saxon not in the servile state; not property attached to the land as the slaves were; he was freed from the oppression of arbitrary bondage; he was often a servant, and a master, but he had the liberty to quit the service of one lord and choose another.

> THAT the Anglo-Saxon freemen were frequently servants, and had their masters, may be proved by a variety of passages in our ancient remains: "If any give flesh to his servants on fast-days, whether they be free or servile, he must compensate for the pillory." 25 So, in the laws of Ina, "if a freeman work on a Sunday without his lord's orders, he shall lose his liberty, or pay sixty shillings." 26 That freemen were in laborious and subordinate conditions, is also strongly implied by a law of Alfred, which says, "These days are forgiven to all freemen, excepting servants and working slaves." The days were, twelve days at Christmas, Passion week, and Easter week, and a few others. *7 An Anglo-Saxon, in a charter, says, with all my men, both servile and freemen. *8

¹⁵ Leg. Wihtrædi, 11.

¹⁶ Leg. Inæ, 15.

²⁷ Leg. Ælf. 44.

²⁸ Thorpe, Reg. Roff. 357.

THEIR state of freedom had great benefits and CHAP. some inconveniences: a slave being the property of another, his master was responsible for his delinquencies; but a freeman, not having a lord to pay for him, was obliged to be under perpetual bail or sureties, who engaged to produce him whenever he should be 29 accused. Being of more personal consideration in society, his mulcts were proportionably greater. If he stole from the king, he was obliged to pay a ninefold compensation 30; if a freeman stole from a freeman, he was to compensate threefold, and all his goods and the penalty were to go to the king. 31 The principle of greater compensation from the free than the servile pervades our ancient laws.

But the benefits of freedom are at all times incalculable, and have been happily progressive. If they had been no more than the power of changing their master at their own pleasure, as our present domestic servants do, even this was a most valuable privilege, and this they exercised. We have an instance of a certain huntsman mentioned, who left the lordship of his master and his land, and chose himself another lord. 32

THEY had many other advantages; their persons were frequently respected in their punishments: thus a theow who broke an ap-

²⁹ Leg. Ethelr. 102.

³º Leg. Ethelb. 2.

³³ MS. Charters of the late Mr. Astle, 28.

BOOK pointed fast might be whipped, but a freeman was to pay a mulct. 33 It was no small benefit that the king was their legal lord and patron: "If any kill a freeman, the king shall receive fifty shillings for lordship." 34 Upon the same principle, if a freeman were taken with a theft in his hand, the king had the choice of the punishment to be inflicted on him; he might kill him, he might sell him over sea, or receive his wære. 35 That they were valued and protected by our ancient legislation, is evident from the provision made for their personal liberty: whoever put a freeman into bonds, was to forfeit twenty shillings. 36

> This happy state of freedom might, however, be lost: the degradation from liberty to slavery was one of the punishments attached to the free. We have mentioned already, that one offence which incurred it, was violating the sabbath. A freeman reduced to slavery by the penalties of law was called a wite theow 37, a penal slave. Under this denomination he occurs in the laws, and is frequently mentioned in wills. Thus Wynfleda, directing the emancipation of some slaves, extends the same benevolence to her wite theow, if there be any. 38 So an archbishop

³⁴ Ibid. p. 2. 33 Leg. Sax. p. 53. 15 Ibid. p. 12. /29897 36 Ibid. p. 3.

³⁷ Ibid. p. 22. Hence the will of archbishop Elfric says, "If any one according to the custom of England shall have incurred the penalty of any slavery," he ordered him to be freed. Cott. MSS. Claud. c. ix. p. 126.

³⁸ Hickes, Pref. Gram.

directs all such to be freed who in his time had CHAP. been mulcted of their liberty. 39 A freeman so reduced to slavery became again subject to corporal punishment; for it was ordered, that one who had stolen while free, might receive stripes from his prosecutor. It was also ordered, that if, while a wite theow, he stole, he was to be hanged. 40

It is well known that a large proportion of Slaves. the Anglo-Saxon population was in a state of slavery. This unfortunate class of men, who were called theow thræl, men, and esne, are frequently mentioned in our ancient laws and charters, and are exhibited in the servile condition of being another's property, without any political existence or social consideration.

They were bought and sold with land, and were conveyed in the grants of it promiscuously with the cattle and other property upon it. Thus, in an enumeration of property on an estate, it is said there were a hundred sheep, fifty-five swine, two men, and five yoked 41 oxen. At another time we find some land given up without injury to any thing belonging to it, whether men, cattle, or food. 42 So one bought land for thirty pounds, and gave seven pounds more for all the things on it, as men, stock, and corn. 43

³⁹ MS. Claud. c. ix. p. 125.

⁴º Leg. Sax. 22. and p. 18.

⁴³ Gale, Script. 481. 43 Heming. Chartul. p. 166.

⁴³ S Gale, 478.; and see the letter of Lullius, Bib. Mag. Pat. vol. xvi. p. 92.

BOOK In the Anglo-Saxon wills these wretched beings are given away precisely as we now dispose of our plate, our furniture, or our money. An archbishop bequeaths some land to an abbey, with ten oxen and two men. 44 Ælfhelm bequeaths his chief mansion at Gyrstingthorpe, with all the property that stood thereon, both provisions and men. 45 Wynfleda, in her will, gives to her daughter the land at Ebbelesburn, and those men, the property, and all that thereon be; afterwards she gives "to Eadmær as much property and as many men as to him had been bequeathed before at Hafene." 46 In another part of her will she says, "of those theowan men at Cinnuc, she bequeaths to Eadwold, Ceolstan the son of Elstan, and the son of Effa, and Burwhyn Mærtin; and she bequeaths to Eadgyfu, Ælfsige the cook, and Tefl the daughter of Wareburga, and Herestan and his wife, and Ecelm and his wife and their child, and Cynestan, and Wynsige, and the son of Bryhtric, and Edwyn, and the son of Bunel, and the daughter of Ælfwer." Wulfgar in his will says, "I give to Ælfere abbot the lands at Ferscesford, with the provisions, and with the men, and with all the produce as it is cultivated." This will contains several bequests of this sort. 47

⁴⁴ MS. Cott. c. ix. p. 125.; and see 1 Dug. M. 306.

⁴⁵ Test. Elfhelmi. App. Sax. Dict.

⁴⁶ Test. Wynfl. Hickes, Pref.

⁴⁷ Test. Wulf. Hickes, Diss. Ep. 54.

THEIR servile state was attended with all the CHAP. horrors of slavery, descending on the posterity of the subjected individuals. A duke in Mercia added to a donation "six men, who formerly belonged to the royal villa in Berhtanwellan, with all their offspring and their family, that they may always belong to the land of the aforesaid church in perpetual inheritance." To this gift is added the names of the slaves. "These are the names of those men that are in this writing, with their offspring, and their family that come from them in perpetual heritage: Alhmund, Tidulf, Tidheh, Lull, Lull, Eadwulf." 48 That whole families were in a state of slavery appears most satisfactorily from the instruments of manumission which remain to us. In them we find a man, his wife, and their offspring, frequently redeemed together; and in Wynfleda's will the wives and daughters of some slaves she names are directed to be emancipated. Ethelstan, after stating that he freed Eadelm, because he had become king, adds, "and I give to the children the same benefit as I give to the father."

Some of the prices of slaves appear in the written contracts of their purchase which have survived.

⁴⁸ Heming. Chart. Wig. p. 61, 62.; and for the next paragraphs see Hickes, Diss. Ep. p. 12., and his Preface; and Wanley's Catalogue, p. 181.

VII.

BOOK "Here is declared in this book, that Ediwic, the widow of Sæwgels, bought Gladu at Colewin for half a pound, for the price and the toll; and Ælword, the port gerefa, took the toll; and thereto was witness Leowin, brother of Leoword, and Ælwi blaca, and Ælwin the king, and Landbiriht, and Alca, and Sæwerd; and may he have God's curse for ever that this ever undoes. Amen."

> So Egelsig bought Wynric, of an abbot, for an yre of gold; another was bought for three mancusæ. 49 The tolls mentioned in some of the contracts for slaves may be illustrated out of Doomsday-book. In the burgh of Lewis it says, that at every purchase and sale, money was paid to the gerefa: for an ox, a farthing was collected; for a man, four pennies.

> THAT the Anglo-Saxons were sold at Rome we learn from the well-known anecdote mentioned by Bede, of Pope Gregory seeing them in the markets there. We also read of one being sold in London to a Frisian 50; and of a person in France relieving many from slavery, especially Saxons, probably continental Saxons, who then abounded in that country. 51 It was expressly enjoined in one of the later laws, that

⁴⁹ Hickes, Diss. p. 12.; and App. Sax. Dict. In the act of purchase, by which Hunnisloh bought Wulfgytha, it is added, "and the brown beadle took the toll." Cott. MSS. Tib. B. 5. As specimens of prices we may add, that Sydefleda was sold for five shillings and some pence; Sæthrytha for three mancusæ: Alfgytha and Gunnilda, each for half of a pound. MSS. C. C. C. Cant. Wanley, Cat. p. 116.

⁵⁰ Bede, 166.

⁵¹ Bouquet's Recueil des Historiens, tom. iii. p. 553.

no Christians, or innocent man, should be sold CHAP. from the land. They appear to have been very numerous. It is mentioned that there were two hundred and fifty slaves, men and women, in the lands given by the king to Wilfrid. But to have a just idea of their number, we must inspect their enumeration in Doomsday-book. No portion of land scarcely is there mentioned without some.

When we consider the condition of the servile, as it appears in the Saxon laws, we shall find it to have been very degraded indeed. They were al-

52 Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 107. "Some young men were exported from Northumberland to be sold, according to a custom which seems to be natural to the people of that country, of selling their nearest relations for their own advantage." - Malmsb. lib. i. c. 3. "There is a sea-port town, called Bristol, opposite to Ireland, into which its inhabitants make frequent voyages on account of trade. Wulfstan cured the people of this town of a most odious and inveterate custom, which they derived from their ancestors, of buying men and women in all parts of England, and exporting them to Ireland for the sake of gain. The young women they commonly got with child, and carried them to market in their pregnancy, that they might bring a better price. You might have seen, with sorrow, long ranks of young persons of both sexes, and of the greatest beauty, tied together with ropes, and daily exposed to sale: nor were these men ashamed, O horrid wickedness! to give up their nearest relations, nay, their own children to slavery. Wulfstan, knowing the obstinacy of these people, sometimes stayed two months among them, preaching every Lord's day; by which, in process of time, he had made so great an impression upon their minds, that they abandoned that wicked trade, and set an example to all the rest of England to do the same." Henry's Hist. vol. iv. p. 238.

⁵³ Bede, iv. c. 13.

BOOK lowed to be put into bonds, and to be 54 whipped. They might be branded 55; and on one occasion they are spoken of as if actually yoked: "Let every man know his teams of men, of horses, and oxen." 56

> THEY were allowed to accumulate some property of their own. We infer this from the laws having subjected them to pecuniary punishments, and from their frequently purchasing their own freedom. If an esne did theow-work against his lord's command, on Sunday evening after sun-set and before the moon set, he was to pay eighty shillings to his lord. 57 If a theow gave offerings to idols, or eat flesh willingly on a fast-day, he was mulcted six shillings, or had to suffer in his hide. 58 If an esne killed another esne, who was in no act of offence, he forfeited all he was worth; but if he killed a freeman, his geld was to be one hundred shillings; he was to be given up by his owner, who was to add the price of another man. 59

> A FATHER, if very poor, was allowed to give his son up to slavery for seven years, if the child consented to it. 60

Freedmen.

If the mass of the Anglo-Saxon population had continued in this servile state, the progress of the nation in the improvements of society would have been very small. But a better destiny awaited them; the custom of manumis-

⁵⁴ Wilk. Leg. Sax. 15. 22. 52, 53. 59.

³⁵ Ibid. p. 103. 139.

⁵⁶ Ibid. p. 47.

⁵⁷ Ibid. p. 11. 58 Ibid. p. 11.

⁵⁹ Ibid. p. 8.

^{40 1} Wilk. Conc. 130.

sion began, and the diffusion of Christianity, by CHAP. mildly attempering the feelings of the individual, and by compelling him to cultivate acts of benevolence as a religious duty, increased the prevalence of the practice.

We have many instances of the emancipation of slaves. A landholder, in Edgar's time, who had thirty men on his grounds, directed that out of these, thirteen should be liberated as lot should decide, so that, placed in the highway, they might go wherever they pleased. It seems to have been an exercise of philanthropy, not uncommon in wills, to give freedom to some of this pitiable class of human kind. Wynfleda displays the compassionate feelings of her sex very strikingly, by directing the emancipation of several of her slaves:—

"Let Wulfware be freed, and follow whomsoever he likes best; and let Wulflæde be freed, on the condition that she follow Æthelfleda and Eadgifa (her daughters); and let Gerburg be freed, and Miscin, and the daughter of Burhulf at Cinnuc; and Ælfsige, and his wife, and his eldest daughter, and Ceolstane's wife; and at Ceorlatune let Pifus be freed, and Edwin, and ——'s wife; and at Saccuncumbe let Ædelm be freed, and man, and Johannan, and Spror and his wife, and Enefette, and Gersand, and Snel; and at Colleshylle let Æthelgythe be freed, and Bicca's wife, and Æffa, and Beda, and Gurhan's wife, and let Bryhsig's wife, the sister of Wulfar, be freed; and ——the workman, and Wulfgythe the daughter of Ælfswythe." 61

WE have many instruments of manumission extant, from which we learn some of the causes which produced it.

^{61 3} Gale, Script. 407.

lence, gave them their freedom. Thus Halwun Noce of Exeter, freed Hagel, his family woman 63; and so Lifgith and his two children were declared free. 64 Sometimes the charitable kindness of others redeemed them:

"Here appeareth in this Christ's book, that Siwine the son of Leofwie, at Lincumb, hath bought Sydelflæda out with five shillings and * * * * * pennies, to perpetual freedom, of John the bishop and all the family at Bath; and hereto witness is Godric Ladda, and Sæwold, and his two sons, Scirewold and Brihtwold." 65

So Æilgyfu the Good redeemed Hig and Dunna, and their offspring, for thirteen mancson. 66 We will give another specimen of these benevolent actions:—

"Here it is stated in this writing, that Aluric, the canon of Exeter, redeemed Reinold and his children, and all their offspring, of Herberdi, for two shillings; and Aluric called them free and sac-less, in town and from town, for God's love; and the witness to this is," &c. 67

Sometimes piety procured a manumission. Thus two Irishmen were freed for the sake of an abbot's soul. 68 But the most interesting kind of emancipation appears in those writings which announce to us, that the slaves had purchased their own liberty, or that of their family. Thus Edric bought the perpetual freedom of Sægyfa, his daughter, and all her offspring.

⁶³ Hickes, Diss. Ep. 12.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Wanley Catal. 152.

⁶⁴ Sax. Dict. App.

⁶⁶ Hickes, Diss. Ep. 12.

⁶⁸ Sax. Dict. App.

So, for one pound, Elfwig the Red purchased CHAP. his own liberty; and Sæwi Hagg bought out his two sons. 69 Godwin the Pale is also notified to have liberated himself, his wife, and children, for fifteen shillings. Brightmær bought the perpetual freedom of himself, his wife Ælgyfu, their children and grandchildren, for two pounds. Leofenoth redeemed himself and his offspring for five oran and twelve sheep; and Ægelsig bought his son's liberty for sixty pennies. 70

The Anglo-Saxon laws recognised the liberation of slaves, and placed them under legal protection. In one of them it is declared, that if any of them freed his slave at the altar, the theow should become folk-free, or free among the people; but his former owner was to possess his property, his weregeld, and his 71 mund. It was enjoined by the synod, held in 816, that at the death of a bishop, his English slaves, who had been reduced to slavery in his lifetime, should be freed. 72

THE liberal feelings of our ancestors towards their enslaved domestics appear in the generous gifts which they made to them. The grants of land from masters to their servants are very common.

Our wise and benevolent Alfred directed

⁶⁹ See all these emancipations in the Appendix to the Saxon Dictionary.

⁷⁰ Hickes, Diss. Ep. 13. 9, 10.

⁷¹ Wilk. Leg. Sax. 11.

³² Spel. Conc. 330.

BOOK one of his laws to lessen the number of the enslaved. He could not emancipate those who were then in servitude, nor their future families. without a violent convulsion of the rights of property which then subsisted; and the general resistance would have made the romantic attempt not only ineffectual, but pernicious, both to those he wished to benefit, and to the society at large. But what he could do safely, he performed. He procured it to be enacted, by the witenagemot, that if any one should in future buy a Christian slave, the time of his servitude should be limited to six years, and that on the seventh he should be free, without any payment, and depart with the wife and the clothes he had at first. But if the lord had given him the wife, both she and her children were to remain. If he chose to continue a slave, he might determine to do so. 73 This law struck a decisive blow at slavery in England; it checked their future multiplication; it discouraged their sale and purchase; it established a system of legal emancipation; and gave the masters a deep interest in the kind treatment of the slaves then belonging to them, in order to preserve the race. From this provision every year added something to the numbers of the free.

> THE servile class was more numerous in England than the free. This is the usual case in all countries where slavery prevails: the laborious class always out-numbers the proprietary body.

CHAP. X.

Their Gilds, or Clubs.

THE gilds, or social confederations, in which many of the Anglo-Saxons chose to arrange themselves, deserve our peculiar attention; we will describe them as they appear to us from some MSS. of their instruments of association which are yet in being. They are remarkable for the social and combining spirit which they display.

One of these is a gild-scipe, composed of eighteen members, at Exeter, whose names are mentioned in it, and to which the bishop and canons are stated to have acceded. It recites, that they have undertaken the association in mutual fraternity; the objects of their union appear to have been, that every hearth, or family, should, at Easter in every year, pay one penny; and on the death of every member of the gild one penny, whether man or woman, for the soul's scot. The canons were to have this soul's scot, and to perform the necessary rites. This gild-scipe somewhat resembles one of our benefit

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¹ Our illustrious Hickes has printed this gild-scipe agreement, with others, in his Dissert. Epist. p. 18.

BOOK VII.

societies, in which the members make small stated payments, and are buried at the expences of the fund so raised.

Another gild-scipe at Exeter purports to have been made for God's love, and their soul's need, and to have agreed that their meetings should be thrice a year; viz. at Michaelmas, at Mary's Mass, over Midwinter, and at the holy days after Easter. Every member was to bring a certain portion of malt, and every cniht was to add a less quantity and some honey. The masspriest was to sing a mass for their living friends, and another for their dead friends, and every brother two psalms. At the death of every member, six psalms were to be chanted; and every man at the rub-rope was to pay five pennies, and at a house-burning one penny. If any man neglected the appointed days, he was to be fined the first time in three masses, the second in five, and the third time no man was to share with him, unless sickness or the compulsion of the Lord occasioned his absence. If any one neglected his payments at the appointed time, he was to pay double; and if any member mis-greeted another, he was to forfeit thirty pence. It concludes thus: "We pray for the love of God that every man hold this meeting rightly, so as we have rightly agreed it should be. May God assist us in this." 2

THERE is an instrument made on the establish-

^a Hickes, Dissert. Epist. p. 21, 22.

ment of a gild of thegns at Cambridge. By this CHAP. every member was to take an oath of true fidelity to each other, and the gild was always to assist him who had the most just claim. If any of the gild died, all the gild-scipe was to carry him wherever he desired; and if any neglected to attend on this occasion, he was fined a syster of honey; and the gild-scipe was to furnish half of the provisions at the interment, and every one was to pay two-pence for alms, and what was suitable was to be taken to St. Etheldrytha. If any of the gild should need the assistance of his companions, and it was mentioned to the gerefa nearest the gild, then if the gerefa neglected him, unless the gild itself was near, he was to pay one pound. If the lord neglected it, he was to forfeit the same sum, unless his superior claims compelled him to the inattention, or sickness prevented. If any killed one of a gild, eight pounds were to be the compensation; and if the homicide did not pay it, all the gildship were to avenge their member, and to support the consequences: if one did it, all were to bear alike. If any of the gild killed any other person, and was in distress, and had to pay for the wrong, and the slain were a twelfhinde person, every one of the gild must help with half a mark. If the slain be a ceorl, let each pay two ora, or one ora if a Welshman. If the gild-man kills any one wilfully or foolishly, he must bear himself what he should do; and if he should kill any of the gild by his own folly, he and his rela-

BOOK tions must abide the consequence, and pay eight pounds for the gild, or else lose its society and friendship. If any of the gild eat or drink with the homicide, unless before the king, or the lord bishop, or the ealdorman, he must pay a pound, unless, with two persons sitting, he can prove that he did not know it. If any of the gild misgreet another, let him pay a syster of honey, unless with two friends he can clear himself. If a cniht draw a weapon, let him pay his lord a pound, and let the lord have it where he may, and all the gild-scipe shall help him to get it. If the cniht wound another, let the lord avenge it. If the cniht sits within the path, let him pay a syster of honey; and if he has a footseat, let him do the same. If any of the gild die, or fall sick, out of the district, let the gild fetch him, and bring him as he wished, either dead or alive, under the penalty before mentioned. If he die at home, and the gild seek not the body, nor his morgen spæce, let a syster of honey be forfeited.3

THESE gilds are sometimes alluded to in the laws. If a man without paternal relations should fight and kill another, then his maternal kinsmen were ordered to pay one-third of the were, his gild a third, and for the other part his gild was to escape. 4 In London there appear to have been free gilds: "This is the council that the bishops and gerefas that belong to London

³ Hickes, Dissert. Epist. p. 20.

Wilkins, Leg. Sax. p. 41.; and see the laws, p. 18.

borough have pronounced, and with pledges con- CHAP. firmed in our free gilds." 5 In a charter concerning Canterbury, the three companies of the citizens within the walls, and those without, are mentioned. 6 Domesday-book likewise notices a gild of the clergy in the same 7 city. They seem, on the whole, to have been friendly associations made for mutual aid and contribution, to meet the pecuniary exigencies which were perpetually arising from burials, legal exactions, penal mulcts, and other payments or compensations. That much good fellowship was connected with them can be doubted by no one. The fines of their own imposition imply that the materials of conviviality were not forgotten. These associations may be called the Anglo-Saxon clubs.

That in mercantile towns and sea-ports there were also gilds, or fraternities of men constituted for the purpose of carrying on more successful enterprises in commerce, even in the Anglo-Saxon times, appears to be a fact. Domesday-book mentions the gihalla, or guildhall, of the burghers of Dover.⁸

⁵ Wilkins, Leg. Sax. p. 65.

⁶ MS. Chart. penes the late Mr. Astle "tha three zerepripar inne buphpapa and utan buphpapa" No. 28.

^{7 &}quot; 32 inauguras quas tenent clerici de villa in gildam suam." Domesday, f. 3.

s "In quibus erat gihalla burgensium." Domesday, f. 1.

CHAP. XI.

Their Trades, Mechanical Arts, and Foreign Commerce.

BOOK VII. TWO things become essential to the peace and comfort of all social unions of mankind;—one, that each should have the means of acquiring the property he needs for his subsistence and welfare; and the other, that he should be accustomed to some employments or amusements, in which his activity and time may be consumed without detriment to others or weariness to himself.

In our age of the world, so many trades, arts, professions and objects, and channels of occupation exist, that, in the ordinary course of life, every member of our population may obtain, without a crime, if he seek with moderate assiduity, the supplies that are necessary both to his wants and his pleasures. It was not so in the Anglo-Saxon times. The trades and arts were few, and foreign commerce was inconsiderable. Invention had not found out conveniences of life sufficient to employ many mechanics or manufacturers, or to give much diversity of employment. The land and its produce were in the hands of a few, and it was

difficult for the rest to get any property by CHAP. honourable or peaceful means. Our Alfred intimates this, for he says, "Now thou canst not obtain money unless thou steal it, or plunder it, or discover some hidden treasure; and thus when you acquire it to yourself you lessen it to others." Violence and rapine were the usual means of acquiring property among that part of the better classes who happened to be unprovided with it. Hence the exhortations of the clergy, and the laws are so full of denunciations against these popular depredators. It is declared to be the duty of an earl to hate thieves and public robbers: to destroy plunderers and spoilers unless they would amend and abstain from such unrighteous actions.2 Tradesmen and merchants are often spoken of as poor and humble men. The great sources of property were from land and war, and from the liberality of the great. It was by slow degrees that trades multiplied, and the productions of the arts and manufactures increased so as to furnish subsistence and wealth to those who wished to be peaceable and domestic.

In the present state, and under the fortunate constitution of the British islands, our tradesmen and manufacturers are an order of men who contribute essentially to uphold our national rank and character, and form a class of actual personal distinction superior to what the

³ Alf. Boet. p. 69. ² Wilk. Leg. Sax. 149.

BOOK same order has in any age or country possessed, except in the middle ages of Italy. They are not only the fountains of that commerce which rewards us with the wealth of the world, but they are perpetually supplying the other classes and professions of society with new means of improvement and comfort; and with those new accessions of persons and property, which keep the great machine of our political greatness in constant strength and activity.

Some proportion of these advantages, gradually increasing, has been reaped by England, from the trading part of its community, in every stage of its commercial progression. But the farther we go back into antiquity, the pursuit was less reputable and the benefits more rare. This class of society in the remote ages was neither numerous, opulent, nor civilised. Our earlier ancestors had neither learnt the utility of dividing labour, nor acquired the faculty of varying its productions. They had neither invention, taste, enterprise, respectability, influence, or wealth. The tradesmen of the Anglo-Saxons were, for the most part, men in a servile state. The clergy, the rich, and the great, had domestic servants, who were qualified to supply them with those articles of trade and manufacture which were in common use. · Hence, in monasteries, we find smiths, carpenters, millers, illuminators, architects, agriculturists, fishermen. Thus a monk is described

as well skilled in smith craft. Thus Wynfleda, CHAP. in her will, mentions the servants she employed in weaving and sewing; and there are many grants of land remaining, in which men of landed property rewarded their servants who excelled in different trades. In one grant, the brother of Godwin gives to a monastery a manor, with its appendages; that is, his overseer and all his chattels, his smith, carpenter, fisherman, miller; all these servants, and all their goods and chattels. 4

THE habits of life were too uniform; its luxuries too few; its property too small; its wants too numerous; and the spirit of the great mass too servile and dull, to have that collection of ingenious, active, respected, and inventive men, who make and circulate our internal and external commerce, with eager, but not illiberal competition; or to have those accomplished artificers and manufacturers, whose taste in execution equals that of the most elegant fancy in its inventions. Neither the workmen nor their customers, however elevated in society, had those faculties of taste and imagination which now accompany the fabrication of every luxury, and almost of every comfort with which mechanical labour surrounds us. Utility, glaring gaudiness, and material value were the chief criterions of the general estimation. The delicacy and ingenuity of the workmanship were

³ Bede, v. c. 14. and p. 634.

^{4 1} Dug. Mon. 306.

BOOK not yet allowed to be able to surpass the substantial worth. No commendation called them into existence; none sought to acquire them; none seemed to anticipate the possibility of their attainment. Hence all were satisfied with the coarse and clumsy, if it had that show which strikes an undiscriminating eye, that sterling value which announced the wealth of its possessor, and that serviceableness for which alone he required it. The Anglo-Saxon artificers and manufacturers were therefore for some time no more than what real necessity put in action. Their productions were few, inartificial, and unvaried. They lived and died poor, unhonoured, and unimproved. But, by degrees, the manumission of slaves increased the numbers of the independent part of the lower orders. Some of the emancipated became agricultural labourers, and took land of the clergy and the great, paying them an annual gafol, or rent; but many went to the burghs and towns, and as the king was the lord of the free, they resided in these under his protection, and became free burghers or burgesses. In these burgs and towns they appear to have occupied houses, paying him rent, or other occasional compensations, and sometimes performing services for him. Thus, in Canterbury, Edward had fifty-one burghers paying him gafol or rent, and over two hundred and twelve others he had the legal sjurisdiction.

Domesday-book, fo. 2.

In Bath, the king had sixty-four burghers, who yielded four pounds. In Exeter, the king had two hundred and eighty-five houses, paying eighteen pounds a year. In some other places we find such compensations as these mentioned: "twelve sheep and lambs, and one bloom of iron, from every free man." These individuals and all such were so many men released from the tyranny of the great. For toll, gafol, and all customs, Oxford paid the king twenty pounds a year, and six sextaria of honey. At Dover, when the king's messenger arrived, the burghers had to pay three-pence for transporting his horse in winter, and two-pence in summer. They also provided a steersman and helper. 10

In the burgs, some of the inhabitants were still under other lords. Thus in Romenel twenty-five burghers belonged to the archbishop. In Bath, after the king's burghers are mentioned, it is said that ninety burghers of other men yielded sixty shillings. In the same place, the church of Saint Peter had thirty-four burghers, who paid twenty shillings." At Romenel, besides those who were under the archbishop, one Robert is stated to have had fifty burghers, of whom the king had every service; but they were freed, on account of

⁶ Domesday-book, p. 87.

lbid. fo. 87. 92. 94.

³⁰ Ibid. fo. 1.

⁷ Ibid. p. 100.

⁹ Ibid. Com. Oxf.

³³ Ibid. fo. 10.

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BOOK their service at sea, from every custom, except robbery, breach of the peace, and forestel. 12

In these places, the services and charges were sometimes most rigorously exacted. It is stated of Hereford, that if any one wished to retire from the city, he might, with leave of the gerefa, sell his house, if he found a purchaser who was willing to perform in his stead the accustomed services; and in this event the gerefa had the third penny of the sale. But if any one, from his poverty, could not do the regular service, he was compelled to abandon his house to the gerefa without any consideration. The gerefa had then to take care that the house did not remain empty, that the king might not lose his dues. 13

In some burgs, the members had been so wealthy as to have acquired themselves a property in the burg. Thus, at Canterbury, the burghers had forty-five mansuras without the city, of which they took the gafol and the custom, while the king retained the legal jurisdiction. They also held of the king thirty-three acres of land in their gild.14

But this state of subjection to gafols, customs, and services, under which the people of the burgs and towns continued, had this great ad-

¹³ Domesday-book, fo. 87.

These customs are excerpted by Gale out of Domesday-book. Hist. iii. p. 768.

Domesday-book, fo. 2.

vantage over the condition of the servile, that CHAP. the exacted burthens were definite and certain, and though sometimes expensive, were never oppressive. Such a state was indeed an independence, compared with the degradation of a theow; and we probably see in these burghers the condition of the free part of the community, who were not actually freeholders of land, or who, though freed, had not wholly left the domestic service of their masters.

By slow degrees the increasing numbers of society or their augmented activity, produced a surplus property beyond the daily consumption, which acquired a permanent state in the country in some form or other, and then constituted its wealth. Every-house began to have some article of lasting furniture or convenience which it had not before; as well as every tradesman goods laid in store; and every farmer corn, or cattle, or implements of tillage more numerous than he once possessed. When this stage of surplus produce occurs, property begins to multiply; the bonds of stern necessity relax; civilisation emerges; leisure increases, and a greater number share it. Other employments than those of subsistence are sought for. Amusement begins to be a study, and to desire a class of society to provide it. The grosser gratifications then verge towards the refinements of future luxury. The mind awakens from the lethargy of sense, and a new spirit, and new objects of industry, invention, and pursuit gradually arise in the

BOOK advancing population. All these successions of improvement become slowly visible to the antiquarian observer as he approaches the latter periods of the Anglo-Saxon dynasty. But they were not the accompaniments of its first state; or, if they at all existed, they were confined to the court, the castle, and the monastery; and were not indeed to be found among the inferior thegns or the poorer cloisters. Some of these had so little property that they could not afford to allow meat, and others not wheaten bread as an article of their food. In such miserable abodes the comforts of surplus property could not be obtained: and where these are not general, the nation is poor. This epithet was long applicable to the Anglo-Saxon octarchy.

Вотн war and agriculture want the smith. Hence one of the most important trades of the Anglo-Saxons was the smith, who is very frequently mentioned. Aldhelm takes the trouble to describe the "convenience of the anvil. the rigid hardness of the beating hammer, and the tenacity of the glowing tongs;" and to remark, that "the gem-bearing belts, and diadems of kings, and various instruments of glory, were made from the tools of iron." 15 The smiths who worked in iron were called isern-smithas. They had also the goldsmith, the seolfersmith (silversmith), and the arsmith or coppersmith. In the dialogues before quoted, the smith says,

²⁵ Aldhelm de Laud. Virg. 298.

"Whence the share to the ploughman, or the CHAP. goad, but from my art? whence to the fisherman an angle, or to the shoe-wyrhta an awl, or to the sempstress a needle, but from my art?" The other replies, "Those in thy smithery only give us iron fire-sparks, the noise of beating hammers, and blowing bellows." 16 Smiths are frequently mentioned in Domesday. In the city of Hereford, there were six smiths, who paid each one penny for his forge, and who made one hundred and twenty pieces of iron from the king's ore. To each of them, threepence was paid as a custom, and they were freed from all other services. 17 In a district of Somerset, it is twice stated, that a mill yielded two plumbas of iron. 18 Gloucester paid to the king thirty-six dicras of iron, and one hundred ductile rods, to make nails for the king's ships. 19

THE treow-wyrhta, literally tree or woodworkman; or, in modern phrase, the carpenter, was an occupation as important as the smith's. In the dialogues above mentioned, he says he makes houses, and various vessels and ships.

The shoemaker and salter appear also in the dialogues: the sceowyrhta, or shoemaker, seems to have been a comprehensive trade, and to have united some that are now very distinct businesses. He says, "My craft is very useful

¹⁶ MS. Tib. A. 3.

¹⁸ Ibid. fo. 94.

²⁷ Domesday-book, in loc.

¹⁹ Ibid, in loc.

BOOK and necessary to you. I buy hides and skins, and prepare them by my art, and make of them shoes of various kinds; and none of you can winter without my craft." He subjoins a list of the articles which he fabricrates: viz.

> Ankle leathers, Bridle thongs, Leather neck-pieces, Trappings, Halters, Shoes, Flasks, Wallets, Boiling vessels, Pouches. Leather hose. Bottles,

THE salter, baker, cook, and fisherman have been described before.

Besides the persons who made those trades their business, some of the clergy, as we advance to the age preceding the Norman conquest, appear to us as labouring to excel in the mechanical arts. Thus Dunstan, besides being competent to draw and paint the patterns for a lady's robe, was also a smith, and worked on all the metals. Among other labours of his industry, he made two great bells for the church at Abingdon. His friend Ethelwold, the bishop, made two other bells for the same place, of a smaller size; and a wheel full of small bells. much gilt, to be turned round for its music, on feast days. He also displayed much art in the fabrication of a large silver table of curious workmanship.20 Stigand, the bishop of Winchester, made two images and a crucifix, and gilt and placed them in the cathedral of his diocese.21 One of our kings made a monk,

³⁰ Dugd. Mon. 104.

²¹ Anglia Sacra, i. p. 293.

who was a skilful goldsmith, an abbot. ²² It was even exacted by law that the clergy should pursue these occupations; for Edgar says, "We command that every priest, to increase knowledge, diligently learn some handicraft." ²³ It was at this period that it began to be felt that skill could add value to the material on which it operated; and as the increasing wealth of society enabled some to pay for its additional cost, a taste for ornament as well as massy value now emerged.

THE art of glass-making was unknown in England in the seventh century, when Benedict, the abbot of Weremouth, procured men from France, who not only glazed the windows of his church and monastery, but taught the Anglo-Saxons the art of making glass for windows, lamps, drinking vessels, and for other 24 uses. Our progress in the art was slow; for we find the disciple of Bede thus addressing a bishop of France on this subject in the next century: "If there be any man in your district who can make glass vessels well, when time permits, condescend to send him to me; or if there is any one out of your diocese, in the power of others, I beg your fraternity will persuade him to come to us, for we are ignorant and helpless in this art: and if it should happen that any of the glass-makers should, by your diligence and with the divine

^{**} MS. Claud. C. 9.

²⁴ Wilk. Leg. Anglo-Sax. 83.

²⁴ Bede, Hist. Abb. Wer. 225.

that if I am alive I will receive him with kind courtesy. 25

The fortunate connection which Christianity established between the clergy of Europe, favoured the advancement of all the mechanical arts. We read perpetually of presents of the productions of human labour and skill passing from the more civilised countries to those more rude. We read of a church having a patine made with Greek workmanship ²⁶; and also of a bishop in England who was a Greek by birth. ²⁷

They had the arts of weaving, embroidering, and dying. Aldhelm intimates these: "We do not negligently despise the woollen stamina of threads worked by the woof and the shuttles, even though the purple robe and silken pomp of emperors shine." Again, "The shuttles not filled with purple only but with various colours, are moved here and there among the thick spreading of the threads, and by the embroidering art they adorn all the woven work with various groupes of images." Edward the Elder had his daughters taught to exercise their needle and their distaff. Indeed, the Anglo-Saxon ladies were so much accustomed to spin-

^{25 16} Mag. Bib. Pat. 88.

⁷⁵ Dugd. Mon. p. 40.

^{27 3} Gale x. Script. 464.

²⁸ Aldhelm de Laud. Virg. 298. 305. He also mentions the fucorum muneribus. Ibid.

²⁹ Malmsb. lib. ii. c. 3. p. 47.

ning, that just as we in legal phrase, and by a reference to former habits now obsolete, term unmarried ladies spinsters, so Alfred in his will, with true application, called the female part of his family the spindle side. The Norman historian remarks of our ancient countrywomen that they excelled with the needle, and in gold embroidery. 30 Aldhelm's robe is described to have been made of a most delicate thread of a purple ground, and that within black circles, the figures of peacocks were worked among them of ample size. 31

Bede alludes to their jewellers and gold-smiths: "A rich and skilful gold-worker, wishing to do some admirable work, collects, whereever he can, remarkable and precious stones to be placed among the gold and silver, as well to show his skill as for the beauty of his work. Those precious stones are chiefly of a ruddy or aerial colour. 32 From the custom of the kings making presents of rich garments, vases, bracelets, and rings to their witena-gemot and courtiers, and of great lords doing the same to their knights, the trades for making these must have had much employment. The gemots often met three times a year. The lords frequently held their imitative courts.

ONE of their trades seems to have been the tavern, or the public house; for a priest is for-

³º Gesta Norman. ap. Du Chesne, 211.

³x 3 Gale x. Script. 351.

³ª Bede's Op. vol. viii. p. 1068.

BOOK bidden to drink "at the wine tuns." 33 An alehouse and ale-shop are also mentioned in the laws, 34

> THE external commerce of these ancient times was confined, because their imperfect civilisation, and the poverty of the great body of their population, prevented an extensive demand for foreign commodities. But the habit of visiting distant parts for the purposes of traffic had already begun. Ohther's voyage proves, that men went to the North, both for the purposes of traffic and of discovery: he says, they pursued whales for their teeth, and made ropes of their hides. 35 We read of merchants from Ireland landing at Cambridge with cloths, and exposing their merchandize to 36 sale. London, even in the seventh century, is mentioned as a port which ships frequented 37; and we find merchants' ships sailing to 38 Rome. The trading vessels sometimes joined together, and went out armed for their mutual protection 39; but we may suppose that while piracy lasted, navigation was unfrequent.

In the Saxon dialogues, the merchant (mancgere) is introduced: "I say that I am useful to

³³ Wilk. Leg. 157.

³⁴ A penalty was inflicted if a man was killed in an eala-huse, ibid. p. 117. A priest was forbidden to be in a eala-scop, ibid. p. 100.

³⁵ See Alfred's account of this voyage in the second volume of this work.

^{36 3} Gale, 482.

³⁷ Dugd. Mon. 76.

³⁸ Bede, 294.

³⁹ Hist. Wilkin.

the king, and to ealdormen, and to the rich, CHAP. and to all people. I ascend my ship with my merchandise, and sail over the sea-like places. and sell my things, and buy dear things which are not produced in this land, and I bring them to you here with great danger over the sea; and sometimes I suffer shipwreck, with the loss of all my things, scarcely escaping myself." 'What do you bring to us?' "Skins, silks, costly gems, and gold; various garments, pigment, wine, oil, ivory, and orichalcus, copper, and tin, silver, glass, and such-like." 'Will you sell your things here as you bought them there?' "I will not, because what would my labour benefit me. I will sell them here dearer than I bought them there, that I may get some profit, to feed me, my wife, and children." 40

That public markets were established in various parts of England in this period, we learn from many documents. It is clear from Domesday-book that these markets paid a toll. In Bedfordshire, a toll de mercato is mentioned, which yielded seven pounds. The market at Taunton paid fifty shillings. 41 A market was established at Peterborough, with the privilege that no other was to be allowed within certain limits in its vicinity. 42

We shall state concisely a few customs as to our commercial navigation. At Chester, if

⁴⁰ MS. Tib. A. 3.

⁴² Ingulf, 46.

^{4&#}x27; Domesday in loc.

BOOK ships should come there, or depart from it, without the king's leave, the king and Comes were to have forty shillings for every man in the ship. If they came in violation of the king's peace, or against his prohibition, the ships, mariners, and their property, were forfeited to the king and Comes. With the royal permission they might sell quietly what they had brought, but they were to pay to the king and his Comes fourpence for every last. If the king's governor should order those having the skins of martens not to sell them before he had seen them, none were to disobey him, under a penalty of forty shillings. This port yielded forty-five pounds, and three timbres of marten-skins. In the same place false measure incurred a fine of four shillings; and for bad ale the offender paid as such, or else was placed on a dunghill. 43

> AT Southwark, no one took any toll on the strand, or the water, but the king. At Arundel, a particular person is named who took the custom paid by foreigners. 44 At Canterbury, a prepositus is stated to have taken the custom from foreign merchants, in certain lands there, which another ought to have received. At Lewes, it is mentioned, that whoever either bought or sold, gave the governor a piece of money. 45

> Particular laws were made by the Anglo-Saxon government to regulate the manner of

⁴³ Domesday in loc.

buying and selling. These laws had two objects CHAP. in view: to prevent or detect theft; and to secure the due payment of the tax or toll which became due on such occasions, 46

WHEN the produce of the labour and fertility of a country begins to exceed its consumption, and no calamity obstructs its natural progress, the amount of its surplus accumulations increases in every generation, till the whole community becomes furnished with permanent goods, and some individuals with peculiar abundance. The Anglo-Saxons had reached this state in the reign of Ethelred. A considerable quantity of bullion coined and uncoined had then become diffused in the nation, and they were enabled to pay those heavy taxations, which were so often imposed, with such impolitic weakness, to buy off the Danish invasions. These unwise payments vexed but did not exhaust the nation. It became wealthy again under the peaceful reign of the Confessor. Both the taste for luxuries, and the spirit of increased production were then pervading the country, and the national affluence was visibly increasing when the Norman armament landed on its coasts.

In the ninth and tenth centuries, the North-

⁴⁶ Several facts concerning the commerce of our ancestors have been occasionally mentioned in the preceding volume, as the intercourse between Offa and Charlemagne, Alfred's embassy to India, Æthelstan's connections with Europe, and Canute's letter, explaining the business which he had transacted with the Pope.

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men were very enterprising in their navigation. They discovered Iceland and Greenland, and a more distant country, which they called Vinland, and which has been considered, not unjustly, to have been some part of the North American continent. 47

A REMARK may be added on their travelling and hospitality. It would seem that they travelled armed. We read of one journeying with his horse and spear; when he alighted, he gave his spear to his attendants. 48

THEIR hospitality was kind: on the arrival of a stranger, he was welcomed; they brought him water to wash his hands; they washed his feet, and for this purpose warm water was used; they wiped them with a cloth, and the host in one case cherished them in his bosom. We also read of warm wine administered to the new guest. 49

Hospitality was, however, dangerous in some degree, from its responsibility: if any one entertained a guest (cuman, literally a comeone) three nights in his own house, whether a trader, or any other person that had come over the boundary, and fed him with victuals, and the guest did any thing wrong, the host was to

⁴⁷ One of the voyages may be seen in Snorre, tom. i. p. 303. 308. Torfæus has discussed this subject in a book on Winland. Mallet has given an interesting chapter on the maritime discoveries of the Northmen, in his Northern Antiquities, vol. i. c. 11. p. 268. of the translation edited by Dr. Percy.

⁴⁸ Bede, p. 233.

⁴⁹ Ibid. p. 234. 251. 257.

bring him to justice or to answer for it. 50 By CHAP. another law, a guest, after two nights' residence. was reckoned part of the family, and the owner of it was to be answerable for his actions. 51

If a shorn man travelled steorless, or vagrantly, hospitality might be given to him once, but he was to have leave of absence before he could be longer maintained. 53

TRAVELLING was attended with some penal regulations: if a stranger in any part went out of the road, or through woods, it was a law that he should either shout aloud, or blow with a horn, on pain of being deemed a thief, and suffering as such. 53

Ir was the habit of depredation that made every traveller an object of legal suspicion at this period. From the peril of the roads, want of communication, the poverty of the middling and lower classes, and the distance, violence, and rapacity of the barons and knights, travelling for the purposes of traffic was very rare, and became more so when the Northman invaders were in the island, and while their unsettled emigrants were continually moving over it. Hence few men left their towns or burghs, but for pillage or revenge; and this occasioned that jealous mistrust of the law which operated so long to discourage even mercantile journies.

⁵⁰ Wilkins, Leg. Sax. p. 9.

⁵¹ Ibid. p. 18.

⁵² Ibid. p. 4.

⁵³ Ibid. p. 12.

CHAP. XII.

Their Chivalry.

THERE is no evidence that the refined and enthusiastic spirit of gallantry, which accompanied chivalry in its perfect stage, prevailed among the Anglo-Saxons: but that chivalry, in a less polished form, and considered as a military investiture, conferred with religious ceremonies, by putting on the belt and sword, and giving the knight a peculiar dignity among his countrymen;—that this kind of chivalry existed in England before the Norman conquest, the authorities adduced in this chapter will sufficiently ascertain.

In the reign of Edward the Confessor, Hereward, a noble Anglo-Saxon youth, distinguished himself by his daring valour and eccentricity. As his character is highly romantic, and affords a remarkable instance of the Anglo-Saxon chivalry, I will state the main incidents of his life, from the plain and temperate narration of his contemporary, who was the Conqueror's secretary.

"His father was Leofric, lord of Brunne, in Lincolnshire, a nobleman who had become very illustrious for his warlike

exploits. He was a relation of the great earl of Herford, CHAP. who had married the king's sister.

- "Hereward was the son of this Leofric and his wife Ediva. He was tall and handsome, but too warlike, and of an immoderate fierceness of mind. In his juvenile plays and wrestlings, he was so ungovernable, that his hand was often raised against every one, and every one's hand against him. When the youths of his age went to wrestling and such other sports, unless he triumphed over all, and his playfellows conceded to him the laurel of victory, he very often extorted by his sword what he could not gain by his muscular strength.
- "The youths of his neighbourhood complaining of this conduct, his father's anger was excited against him. Leofric stated to king Edward the many intolerable tricks that had been practised even upon himself, and his excessive violence towards others. Upon this representation, the Confessor ordered him into banishment.
- "Hereward, thus exiled, went fearlessly to Northumbria, thence to Cornwall, thence to Ireland, and afterwards to Flanders; and every where most bravely carrying himself, he soon obtained a glorious and magnificent reputation.
- "In every danger intrepidly pressing forward, and happily escaping; in every military conflict always throwing himself on the bravest, and boldly conquering; it was doubtful whether he was more fortunate or brave. His victories over all his enemies were complete, and he escaped harmless from the greatest battles.
- "Becoming so illustrious by his military successes, his valiant deeds became known in England, and were sung through the country. The dislike of his parent, relatives, and friends, was changed into the most ardent affection.
- "In Flanders he married a noble lady, Turfrida, and had by her a daughter, who lately married (I am transcribing Ingulf) an illustrious knight, a great friend to our monastery, and lord of Depyng and the paternal inheritance of Brunne and its appurtenances.
- "The mother of Turfrida coming to England with her husband, with his permission forsook all earthly pomp, and became a nun in our monastery of Croyland.
 - " Hereward returning to his native soil with his wife,

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after great battles, and a thousand dangers frequently dared and bravely terminated, as well against the king of England, as the earls, barons, prefects, and presidents, which are yet sung in our streets (says Ingulf), and having avenged his mother with his powerful right hand, at length, with the king's pardon, obtained his paternal inheritance, and ended his days in peace, and was very lately buried near his wife in our monastery." ³

It is obvious, from the connection of this singular character with Croyland monastery, that no one could furnish us with more authentic particulars of him than Ingulf, who lived at the time, and was a monk in the same place. I will add a few more circumstances, which the same writer has recorded concerning him.

It was in Flanders, that Hereward heard that the Normans had conquered England; that his father was dead; that the Conqueror had given his inheritance to a Norman; and that his mother's widowhood was afflicted by many injuries and distresses. Transported with grief at the account, he hastened with his wife to England, and, collecting a body of her relations, he thundered on the oppressors of his mother, and drove them from her territory.

At this period of the narration, the important passage 2 occurs, which gives such complete evidence to the Anglo-Saxon chivalry.

"Considering then, that he was at the head of very brave men, and commanded some *milites*, and had not yet been legally bound with the belt, according to the military custom, he took with him a very few tyros of his cohort, to be legi-

³ Ingulf, p. 67, 68.

² Ibid. p. 70.

timately consociated with himself to warfare, and went to his CHAP. uncle, the abbot of Peterborough, named Brand, a very religious man (as I have heard from my predecessor, my lord Ulketul, abbot, and many others), much given to charity, and adorned with all the virtues; and having first of all made a confession of his sins, and received absolution, he very urgently prayed that he might be made a legitimate miles. For it was the custom of the English, that every one that was to be consecrated to the legitimate militia, should, on the evening preceding the day of his consecration, with contrition and compunction, make a confession of all his sins to a bishop, an abbot, a monk, or some priest; and, devoted wholly to prayers, devotions, and mortifications. should pass the night in the church; in the next morning should hear mass, should offer his sword on the altar, and after the Gospel had been read, the priest having blessed the sword, should place it on the neck of the miles, with his benediction. Having communicated at the same mass with the sacred mysteries, he would afterwards remain a legitimate miles."

HE adds, that the Normans regarded this custom of consecrating a miles as abomination, and did not hold such a one a legitimate miles, but reckoned him a slothful equitem and degenerate quiritem.

From the preceding account we collect these things,

1st, That a man might take up arms, head warriors, fight with them, and gain much military. celebrity, and yet not thereby become a legitimate miles.

2d, That he could not reputably head milites, without being a legitimate miles.

3d, That to be a legitimate miles was an honorary distinction, worthy the ambition of a

BOOK man who had previously been of such great VII. military celebrity as Hereward.

4th, That to be a miles, an express ceremony

of consecration was requisite.

5th, That the ceremony consisted of a confession and absolution of sins, on the day preceding the consecration; of watching in the church, all the previous night, with prayers and humiliations; of hearing mass next morning; of offering his sword on the altar, of its being blessed by the priest; of its being then placed on his neck; and of his afterwards communicating. He was then declared a legitimate miles.

6th, The mode above described, was the Anglo-Saxon mode; but there was another mode in existence after the Conquest: for it is expressly mentioned, that the Normans did not use, but detested, the custom of religious consecration.

7th, That a legitimate miles was invested with a belt and a sword.

Another passage, which alludes to the Anglo-Saxon chivalry, is in Malmsbury, in which he expressly declares, that Alfred made Athelstan a miles. He says, that Alfred, seeing Athelstan to be an elegant youth, prematurely made him a miles, investing him with a purple garment, a belt set with gems, and a Saxon sword, with a golden sheath.³

THE investiture of the belt, alluded to in the account of Hereward, and in Malmsbury's ac-

³ Malmsbury, p. 49.

count of Athelstan's knighthood, is also mentioned by Ingulf, on another occasion. Speaking of the famous Saxon chancellor Turketul, who died in 975, he says, that he had, among other relics, the thumb of St. Bartholomew, with which he used to cross himself in danger, tempest, and lightning. A dux Beneventanus gave this to the emperor, when he girded him with the first military belt. The emperor gave it to the chancellor. An author who died in 1004, says, "Whoever uses the belt of his knighthood (militiæ), is considered as a knight (miles) of his dignity." 5

That there was a military dignity among the Saxons, which they who wrote in Latin expressed by the term miles, is, I think, very clear, from other numerous passages. There are many grants of kings and others extant to their militibus. Thus Edred, "cuidam meo ministro ac militi," "meo fideli ministro ac militi," "cuidam meo militi." The word miles cannot here mean simply a soldier. So to many charters we find the signatures of several persons characterised by this title. Bede frequently uses the term in passages and with connections which shew

⁴ Ingulf, p.51.

⁵ Abb. Flor. in Can. c. 51. Quisquis militiæ suæ cingulo utitur, dignitatis suæ miles adscribitur.

⁶ MS. Claud. B. 6. So an archbishop gives land, Heming. Chart. 191. 210, 234.

⁷ To a charta of Edward Confessor, five sign with the addition of miles. MS. Claud. B. 6. Eleven sign with miles to a charta of Ethelwulph. Text, Roff.

BOOK that he meant to express dignity by it. We are at least certain that his royal Anglo-Saxon translator believed this, because he has always interpreted the expression, when it has this signification, by a Saxon word of peculiar dignity.8 Ingulf mentions several great men, in the Anglo-Saxon times, with the addition of miles, as an augmentation of their consequence; and once introduces a king styling a miles his magister.9 Domesday-book mentions several milites as holding lands.

> But although the Anglo-Saxons had a military dignity, which their Latin writers called miles, I do not think that the word cniht was applied by them to express it; at least, not till the latter periods of their dynasty.

> It has been shewn, in the chapter on their infancy and education, that a youth was called a cniht. By the same term they also denoted an attendant. To In Cedmon it occurs a few

8 Bede: alium de militibus. cum his - militibus. milite sibi fidelissimo, prefato milite. comitibus ac militibus, de militia ejus juvenis,

Alfred: orhepne cyninger chezn, mis hir theznum, hir thezne - zerpeoperte. roperprecenan hir thezne, hir zeropum, cyninger theznum. rum zeonz thor cyninger thezn. P. 511. 525, 539, 551, 590,

⁹ Ingulf, p. 6. 14. 20. 25. 63. This use of the word miles is one of Hickes's reasons for his attack on Ingulf; an attack which is clearly ill-founded. I feel every gratitude to Hickes for his labours on the Northern languages; but I cannot conceal that I think him mistaken on several very important points of the Saxon antiquities.

Cen. xxi. 65. Luke, vii. 7. and xii. 45.

times; but it seems to have been used to CHAP. mean youths. Speaking of Nabochodonossor, he says,

He commanded his gerefas, out of the miserable relics of the Israelites, to seek some of the youth that were most skilled in the instruction of books.

He would, that the cnihtas should learn the craft to interpret dreams.¹¹

Then they there found for their sagacious lord noble cnihtas.¹²

Speaking of the adoration of the image of Dara, he says,

The cnihtas of a good race acted with discretion, that they the idol would not as their god hold and have. 13
Then was wrath the king in his mind.
He commanded an oven to heat to the destruction of the lives of the cnihtas. 14

The word has no military distinction in these passages.

ÆLFRIC, in his glossary, interprets cniht-had by pueritia, pubes; and to oth cniht-hade he puts pube tenus.

THERE are, however, instances of grants to enihtas, which imply that after Alfred's reign,

zz Cedmon, p. 77.

¹³ Ibid. p. 79.

¹² Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 80.

BOOK and those of his immediate descendants, the word was gradually advancing, from the expression of a youth or an attendant, to signify a more dignified sort of dependent. A Saxon will has, "Let men give my cnihtas and my stewardas witas forty punda." Ælfhelm, in his will, says, "I give to my wife and my daughter half the land at Cunnington, to be divided, except the four hides that I give to Æthelric and Alfwold, and the half hide that I give to Osmær, my cniht." Æthelstan Ætheling, in his will, expresses, "I give my father, king Æthelræd, the land at Cealhtun, except the eight hides that I have given to Ælmor, my cniht."- " And I give to Æthelwin, my cniht, the sword that he before gave me." 15 There are three grants of land from Oswald, archbishop, to cnihts; and it is important to observe, he does not call them his cnihts, or any other person's cnihts, but he calls them sumum cnihte, some cniht, or a cniht, as if cniht had been a definite and well-known character. His words are, "One hide at Hymeltun to sumum cniht, whose name is Wulfgeat;"-" two hides,

^{*5} See these wills in the appendix to the Saxon dictionary. I perceive from Osfred's Franco-theotise Paraphrase of the Gospels, that the word knight, or knechro, was used by the Franks, in the ninth century, to express the meaning of miles; for he says,

Ein thepo knechto thir zirah. "Unus militum hoc videt." Lib. iv. 53, 54. See also another citation in Schilter's Glossary, p. 518.

all but sixty acres, to sumum cniht, whose name CHAP. is Æthelwold;"-"-hides to sumum cniht, whose name is Osulf, for God's love, and for our peace." 16

In the admonitions to different orders of men. printed with the Anglo-Saxon laws, there is a passage which gives cniht and cnihthood in a meaning rather different from those which have been stated: "That will be a rightlike life, that a cniht continues in his cnihthade till he marries rightly a maiden wife, and have her then afterwards, and no other while she lives." 17 Cnihthade here implies chastity and bachelorship.

PERHAPS cniht originally signified a boy, afterwards a servant who was not a slave. It may have been then applied to denote a military attendant; and in this sense it gradually superseded the word thegn, which I think was the Saxon term for the dignity implied by the term miles. A knight, even in the full chivalric meaning, was a military servant of somebody, either of the king, the queen, a favourite lady, or some person of dignity. In a state very similar to this are the cnihtas in the Saxon wills. They appear to us, in like manner, in a rank far above a servant in the Saxon gild-scipes. Of these fraternities, cnihts constituted a part, and are distinctly mentioned, though with a reference to some lord to whom they were subordinate; a situation which seems best explained,

¹⁶ Heming. Chart.

¹⁷ Wilkins, Leg. Sax. p. 150.

VII.

BOOK by supposing them free and respectable military dependents. " If a cniht draw a sword, the lord shall pay one pound, and let the lord get it when he may; and all the gild-scipe shall help him, that he may get his money. And if a cniht wounds another, his lord shall avenge it. And if a cniht sits within the ascent, let him pay one syster of honey; and if he has any foot-stool, let him pay the same." 18 In another gild-scipe, after each of the gild has been directed to bring two systers of malt, it is added, "And let every cniht bring one, and a sceat of honey." 19

> It occurs again, as a known and recognised character, in an act of a slave's emancipation, "Thereto is witness, William of Orchut, and Ruold the cniht, and Osbern fadera, and Umfreig of Tettaborn, and Alword the portreeve, and Johan the cniht." 20

> IT occurs again as the designation of a known and reputable character in society, in a Saxon charta about land; for after many witnesses have been mentioned by name, these words follow: " And many a good cniht besides these." at

> THE term as well as the character of cniht was, therefore, in the Anglo-Saxon period, rising fast to its full station of dignity.

See the Gild-scipe in Hickes's Diss. Ep. p. 21.

¹⁹ Ibid. p. 22. ²⁰ Ibid. p. 18.

Hickes, Gram. Pref. p. xxi.

THERE is a character represented in the illu- CHAP. minations and drawing of a Saxon MS. which I think answers to the situation of a cniht, in its more advanced meaning. When a king is sitting on his throne, he is drawn as holding his sceptre. Close by him, and as a part of his public dignity, a person is standing, holding his sword and shield. This figure occurs several times in the drawings of Genesis, in Claud. B. 4. A similar character occurs near a king in the battle. The king is fighting; an armed attendant, apparently a young man, is fighting near him. I consider these to represent what was originally called a king thegn, or miles, and afterwards a cniht; and such a character Lilla appears to have been, who received the assassin's blow that was intended for Edwin. **

TOURNAMENTS appear to have been used in the age of the Anglo-Saxons, for they are expressly mentioned in the laws of the emperor of Germany, Henry the First. It was in 934 that he published institutions concerning ²³ them.

²² See the 1st vol. of this work.

²³ Goldastus, in his Constitutiones Imperiales, vol. ii. p. 41. has the Henrici I. Aucupis leges hastiludiales sive de torneamentis, which, he says, were latæ Gottingæ in Saxonia, 938. The author of the Aquila Saxonica, p. 27., says it should be 934. These leges are also mentioned in Fabricius Hist. Sax. i. p. 122. The Aquila Saxonica quotes also at length other statuta et privilegia of these games, made at Magdeburg. This imperial document contradicts the opinion, that tournaments originated in 1066, which Dufresne gives,

BOOK By these he directs, that the equestrian games, to be fought by the usual weapons, should be solemnly exhibited in the empire by those of noble descent. All blasphemers and traitors, they who had deprived widows or virgins of their honour or property; the perjured, the coward, the homicide, and the sacrilegious; they who had robbed the orphan, who had attacked the unsuspecting, who had harassed society, and injured the commercial; the adulterer and the merchant; were prohibited from partaking of the diversions. If they presumed to present themselves, their horses were taken away, and they were to be thrown on the septum. 24

> THE city or place appropriated for the exercises was made free to all except heretics, thieves, and traitors, during the time of the games, and for fourteen days preceding and afterwards. The area of the games was to be hedged round: every combatant was to be first confessed and absolved; every count was to bring with him but six companions; a baron four, a knight three, others only

³ Gloss. Med. 1147. Wittichind, who addressed his history to the grand-daughter of Henry, expressly says of this emperor, "In exercitiis quoque ludi tanta eminentia superabat omnes ut terrorem cæteris ostentaret," p. 15. Previous to this, Nithard mentions, that some French gentlemen fought in play on horseback.

Goldastus ubi supra.

two, unless they maintained them at their own CHAP. expence. *5

SOMETHING like atrophy appears in a description of Saxon boundaries of land: "Thence to the limit of a banner, coat of mail, and helmet, both of the kings and of Eadbald is in an ashtree." 26

No shield-maker was allowed to put a sheep's skin on a shield.*7 Was this provision made to favour the manufacture of parchment for their books?

- ²⁵ Aquila Saxonica, p. 28, 29., where the other provisions, established for the regulation of the tournaments, may be seen.
 - ³⁶ Hem. Chart. p. 7.
- ²⁷ Wilk. Leg. p. 59. I observe another passage in the canons of Edgar relating to cnihtes: "We teach that every priest should have at the synods his cleric, and a fit man to cnihte, and no one unwise that loves folly." Wilk. Leg. p. 82. This is not a passage applicable to a boy, but to a manly attendant on the superior priests at the great councils.

CHAP. XIII.

Their Superstitions.

THE belief, that some human beings could attain the power of inflicting evils on their fellow-creatures, and of controlling the operations of nature, existed among the Anglo-Saxons, but did not originate with them. It has appeared in all the regions of the globe; and from its extensive prevalence we may perceive that the human mind, in its state of ignorance and barbarism, is a soil well adapted to its reception and cultivation. It is not true that fear first made a deity; but it cannot be

parents of superstition.

Life has so many evils which the uninstructed mind can neither prevent nor avert, and encourages so many hopes which every age and condition burn to realize, that we cannot be astonished to find a large portion of mankind the willing prey of impostors, practising on their credulity by threats of evil and promises of good, greater than the usual course of nature would dispense. In every country where the intelligent religions of Judaism or Christianity were

doubted that fear, vanity, and hope are the

unknown, these delusions obtained a kind of CHAP. legal sovereignty, and peculiarly in Thrace and Chaldea. But that such frauds and absurdities should be countenanced, where the genuine revelations of the Divine wisdom prevail, may reasonably excite both our astonishment and regret, especially as they have been steadily discountenanced by both civil and ecclesiastical laws. Their foundation seems to lie deep in the heart's anxiety about futurity; in its impatience for good greater than it enjoys; and in its restless curiosity to penetrate the unknown, and to meddle with the forbidden.

But the superstitions of magic and witchcraft began among the civilised nations of the earth, and prevailed even in Greece and Rome, before the Saxons are known to have had an historical existence. The general diffusion of the fond mistake forbids us to derive the later impostures from those which preceded; but as every thing that was popular among the Romans must have scattered some effects on the nations with whom they had intercourse, we will glance at the opinions which the masters of the world, who so long colonised our island, admitted on this delusive subject.

WE are familiar in our youth with the incantations alluded to by Virgil and Horace, and described by Lucan: it is still more amusing to read of Apuleius, who flourished under the Antonines, and who, though born in Africa, was educated at Athens, that he was accused of

by his incantations. In his Metamorphoseon we have a curious picture of the witchcraft which was believed to exist in the ancient world. One of his characters is described as a saga, or witch, who could lower the sky, and raise the manes of the dead. She is stated to have transformed one lover into a beaver, another into a frog, and another into a ram; to have condemned a rival wife to perpetual gestation; to have closed up impregnably all the houses of a city, whose inhabitants were going to stone her; and to have transported the family of the authors of the commotion to the top of a

ANOTHER lady of similar taste is mentioned to have been a maga, mistress of every sepulchral song, who, by twigs, little stones, and such like petty instruments, could submerge all the light of the world in the lowest Tartarus, and into ancient chaos; who could turn her lovers that displeased her into stones or animals, or entirely destroy them.²

distant mountain.

APULEIUS afterwards gives us a description of one of her achievements. In the dead of the night, as two friends are sleeping in a room, the doors burst open with great fury; the bed of one is overturned upon him; two witches enter, one carrying a light, the other a sponge and a sword. This stabs her sleeping faithless lover,

Apul. Metamorph. lib. i. p. 6. Ibid. p. 21.

plunges the weapon up to its hilt in his throat, CHAP. receives all the blood in a vessel, that not a drop might appear, and then takes out his heart. The other applied her sponge to the wounds, saying, "Sponge! sea-born! beware of rivers!" The consequence was, that though he waked, and travelled as well as ever, yet when on his journey he approached a river, and proceeded to drink at it, his wounds opened, the sponge flew out, and the victim fell dead.

Apuleius himself was a great student of magic. The chief seat of all these wonders is declared to have been Thessaly; and so popular was the notion of witchcraft among those nations whom in our youth we are taught almost exclusively to admire, that even philosophers

3 Mr. Cumberland in his Observer, No. 31., has noticed the magical powers ascribed in the Clementine recognitions, and Constit. Apos. to Simon Magus, viz. That he created a man out of the air; that he had the power of being invisible; that he could make marble as penetrable as clay; could animate statues; resist the effects of fire; present himself with two faces, like Janus; metamorphose himself into a sheep or a goat; fly at pleasure through the air; create gold in a moment; and at a wish take a scythe in his hand and mow a field of corn almost at a stroke; and recall the unjustly murdered to life. A woman of public notoriety looking out of the window of a castle on a great crowd below, he was said to have made her appear, and then fall down from every window of the place at the same time. To these fancies Anastasius Nicenus added, that Simon was frequently preceded by spectres, which he declared to be the spirits of certain persons that were dead. It is extraordinary that the ancients framed no romantic tales on imaginations so favourable to interesting fiction. - If it is the same and the same

the traces who gives a next a musing of he was adventured to her



BOOK thought that they accounted sufficiently for the miracles of the Christian legislator, by referring them to magic.

> WE will consider the Anglo-Saxon superstitions under the heads of their witchcraft, their charms, and their prognostics.

> THEIR pretenders to witchcraft were called wicca, scin-læca, galdor-cræftig, wiglær, and morthwyrtha. Wiglær is a combination from wig, an idol or a temple, and lær, learning, and may have been one of the characters of the Anglo-Saxon idolatry. He was the wizard, as wicca was the witch. Scinlæca was a species of phantom or apparition, and was also used as the name of the person who had the power of producing such things: it is, literally, a shining dead body. Galdor-cræftig implies one skilled in incantations; and morthwyrtha is, literally, a worshipper of the dead.

> Another general appellation for such personages was dry, a magician. The clergy opposed these follies in their homilies. 4

> THE laws notice these practices with penal severity. The best account that can be given of them will be found in the passages proscribing them.

⁴ Thus, in a homily against auguries it is said, " That the dead should rise through dry-cræft, deofol gild, wicc-cræft, and wiglunga, is very abominable to our Saviour; and they that exercise these crafts are God's enemies, and truly belong to the deceitful devil, with him to dwell for ever in eternal punishment." MSS. Bodl. Wanl. Cat. p. 42.

" IF any wicca, or wiglær, or false swearer, CHAP. or morthwyrtha, or any foul, contaminated, manifest horowenan, (whore quean or strumpet,) be any where in the land, man shall drive them out."

"WE teach that every priest shall extinguish all heathendom, and forbid wilweorthunga (fountain-worship), and licwiglunga (incantations of the dead), and hwata (omens), and galdra (magic), and man-worship, and the abominations that men exercise in various sorts of witchcraft, and in frithsplottum, and with elms and other trees, and with stones, and with many other phantoms."6

From subsequent regulations, we find that these practices were made the instruments of the most fatal mischief; for penitentiary penalties are enjoined if any one should destroy another by wicce cræfte; or if any should drive sickness on a man; or if death should follow from the attempt. 7

THEY seem to have used philtres; for it is also made punishable if any should use witchcraft to produce another's love, or should give him to eat or to drink with magic. 8 They were also forbid to wiglian by the moon.9 Canute renewed the prohibitions. He enjoined them not to worship the sun or the moon, fire or floods, wells or stones, or any sort of tree; not

⁵ Wilk. Leg. Anglo-Sax. p. 53.

⁷ Ibid. p. 93. 8 Ibid.

⁶ Ibid. p. 83.

⁹ MS. Tib. A. 3.

BOOK to love wiccecræft, or frame death-spells, either by lot or by torch; nor to effect any thing by phantoms. 10 From the Pœnitentiale of Theodore we also learn, that the power of letting loose tempests was also pretended to.11

> ANOTHER name for their magical arts was unlybban wyrce, literally, destructive of life. The penitence is prescribed for a woman who kills a man by unlybban. One instance of their philtres is detailed to us. A woman resolving on the death of her step-son, or to alienate from him his father's affection, sought a witch, who knew how to change minds by art and enchantments. Addressing such a one with promises and rewards, she enquired how the mind of the father might be turned from the child, and be fixed on herself. The magical medicament was immediately made, and mixed with the husband's meat and drink. The catastrophe of the whole was the murder of the child; and the discovery of the crime by the assistant, to revenge the step-mother's ill-treatment.12

> THE charms used by the Anglo-Saxons were innumerable. They trusted in their magical incantations for the cure of disease 13, for the

¹⁰ Wilkins, p. 134.

Spelm. Concil. 155. They dreaded spectres; and one of their medical recipes is, " If a man suffer from a scinlac, or spectre, let him eat lion's flesh, and he will never suffer from any scinlac again." Cott. MSS. Vitell. C. 3.

^{23 3} Gale's Script. p. 439.

¹³ For incantations to cure various diseases, see Wanley's Catalogue of Saxon MSS. p. 44. 115. 231, 232, 234. 305.

success of their tillage 14, for the discovery of CHAP. lost property 15, for uncharming cattle, and for the prevention of casualties. 16 Specimens of their charms for these purposes still remain to us. Bede tells us, that "many, in times of disease (neglecting the sacraments) went to the erring medicaments of idolatry, as if to restrain God's chastisements by incantations, phylacteries, or any other secret of the demoniacal arts." 17

THEIR prognostics, from the sun and moon, from thunder, and from dreams, were so numerous, as to display and to perpetuate a most lamentable debility of mind. Every day of every month was catalogued as a propitious or unpropitious season for certain transactions. We have Anglo-Saxon treatises which contain rules for discovering the future fortune and disposition of a child, from the day of his nativity. One day was useful for all things; another, though good to tame animals, was baleful to sow seeds. One day was favourable to the commencement of business; another to let blood; and others wore a forbidding aspect to these and other things. On this day they were to buy, on a second to sell, on a third to

¹⁴ For charms to make fields fertile, see Wanley, p. 98, 225.

¹⁵ For charms to find lost cattle, or any thing stolen, see Wanley, p. 114. 186.

¹⁶ For amulets against poison, disease, and battle, see also Wanley.

¹⁷ Bede, lib.iv. c. 27.

BOOK hunt, on a fourth to do nothing. If a child was born on such a day, it would live; if on another, its life would be sickly; if on another, it would perish early. In a word, the most alarming fears, and the most extravagant hopes, were perpetually raised by these foolish superstitions, which tended to keep the mind in the dreary bondage of ignorance and absurdity, which prevented the growth of knowledge, by the incessant war of prejudice, and the slavish effects of the most imbecile apprehensions. 18

> THE same anticipations of futurity were made by noticing on what day of the week or month it first thundered, or the new moon appeared, or the new-year's day occurred. Dreams likewise had regular interpretations and applications; and thus life, instead of being governed by the councils of wisdom, or the precepts of virtue, was directed by those solemn lessons of gross superstition, which the most ignorant peasant of our days would be ashamed to avow.19 How

¹⁸ See especially MS. Tiberius, A. 3. and Bede's works on these subjects. A few specimens may amuse: " On the first night of the moon, go to the king and ask what you like. Whatever you see at the first appearance of the new moon will be a blessing to you. In the beginning of the moon it is useful to do any thing. If a man be born on a Sunday he will live without trouble all his life. If it thunder in the evening, some great person is born. If new-year's day be on a Monday it will be a grim and confounding winter When you see a bee fast in the briar, wish what you please and it will not fail you."

⁵⁹ Some of their fancies: " If a man dream that he hath a burning candle in his hand, it is a sign of good. If he

lamentable is it that mankind should have such CHAP. an inveterate propensity to resort to the meanest agencies, and most capricious accidents of nature, for aid or comfort in their anxieties and difficulties, rather than to confide in its Author, solicit his kindness, or resign themselves to his will; rather than calmly await his benevolent dispensations, and trust to his discernment for the fittest season of their occurrence and duration. 30

dream that he sees an eagle over his head, it implies dignity to him, and the greater, the higher the bird flies. Whatever we dream on the first night of the old moon will become joyful to us."

20 Even while this page is penning, one Gipsy is offering her prognostications, surprised at being refused; and another is employed in a neighbouring garden, by three intellectual beings, to delude them by her random predictions, which she

afterwards ridicules them for believing!

to another at the day - that the Oredolly of Willer off is no large believed agrees the educated Classes - but they To their was to the So you live It was only but your other, poor Wood was violated half burish from the blue to which the has been consigned for we level in Walne only become the ho Those Sugarity than her Pray about VOL. III.

CHAP. XIV.

Their Funerals.

the body had become established among the Anglo-Saxons, at the æra when their history began to be recorded by their Christian clergy, and was never discontinued.

Their common coffins were wood; the more costly were stone. Thus a nun who had been buried in a wooden coffin was afterwards placed in one of stone. Their kings were interred in stone coffins ; they were buried in linen , and the clergy in their vestments. In two instances mentioned by Bede, the coffin was provided before death. We also read of the place of burial being chosen before death, and sometimes of its being ordered by will.

With the common sympathy of human nature, friends are described as attending, in illness, round the bed of the diseased. On their de-

² Bede, lib. iv. c. 19.

³ Ibid. c. 19.

² Ibid. c. 4. ⁴ Ibid. p. 261.

⁵ Ibid. lib. v. c. 5. and lib. iv. c. 11.

^{6 3} Gale Script. 470.

parture, we read of friends tearing their clothes CHAP. and hair. One who died, is mentioned to have been buried the next day.8 As Cuthbert, the eleventh bishop from Augustin, obtained leave to make cemeteries within cities 9, we may infer that the more healthful custom, of depositing the dead at some distance from the habitations of the living, was the general practice; but afterwards it became the custom of England to bury the dead in the churches. The first restriction to this practice was the injunction that none should be so buried, unless it was known that in his life he had been acceptable to God. It was afterwards ordered that no corpse should be deposited in a church, unless of an ecclesiastic, or a layman so righteous as to deserve such a distinction. All former tombs in churches were directed to be made level with the pavement, so that none might be seen: and if in any part, from the number of the tombs, this was difficult to be done, then the altar was to be removed to a purer spot, and the occupied place was to become merely a burying-ground.10

Some of their customs at death may be learnt from the following narrations. It is mentioned in Dunstan's life, that Æthelfleda, when on her death-bed, said to him, "Do thou, early in the morning, cause the baths to be hastened, and the funeral vestments to be prepared, which I

⁷ Eddius, p. 64.

⁹ Bede, p. 302.

⁹ Dugd. Mon. i. p. 25.

²⁰ Wilk. Leg. Anglo-Sax. p. 179. p. 84.

BOOK am about to wear; and after the washing of my body, I will celebrate the mass, and receive the sacrament; and in that manner I will die." "

> THE sickness, death, and burial of archbishop Wilfrid, in the eighth century, is described with these particulars. On the attack of his illness, all the abbots and anchorites near were unwearied in their prayers for his recovery. He survived, with his senses; and power of speech returned, for a year and a half. A short time before his death, he invited two abbots and six faithful brethren to attend him, and desired them to open his treasure-chest with a key. The gold, silver, and precious stones therein were brought out, and divided into four parts, as he directed. One of these he ordered to be sent to the churches at Rome, as a present for his soul; another part was to be divided among the poor of his people; a third he gave to some monasteries, to obtain therewith the friendship of the kings and bishops; and the fourth he destined to those who had shared in his labours, and to whom he had not given lands.

AFTER his death, one of the abbots spread his

MSS. Cleop. B. 13. This life has been printed in the Acta Sanctorum for May, from a MS. brought from the Vedastine monastery at Rome. This MS. differs from the Cotton MS. in some particulars. It has the preface, which the Cotton MS. wants; but it has not two pages of the conclusion, which are in the Cotton MS. In the body of the Roman MS. there are forty-two hexameters which are not in the Cotton MS.

linen garments on the ground. The brethren CHAP. laid his body on it, washed it with their hands, and put on his ecclesiastical dress. Afterwards they wrapped it in linen, and singing hymns, they conducted it in a carriage to the monastery. All the monks came out to meet it; none abstained from tears and weeping. They received it with hymns and chantings, and deposited it in the church which he had built. 12

ONE of the nobles who attended the king at his Easter court, having died, it is mentioned that his body was carried to Glastonbury; and the king ordered some of the bishops, earls, and barons, to attend the bier thither with honour.¹³

When the body of an alderman was taken to the monastery at Ramsay to be buried, a numerous assemblage from the neighbourhood met to accompany his exequies.¹⁴

The saul-sceat, or the payment of the clergy on death, became a very general practice. No respectable person died or was buried without a handsome present to some branch or other of the ecclesiastical establishment.

Nothing can more strongly express the importance and necessity of this custom, than that several of their gilds seem to have been formed chiefly with a view to provide a fund for this purpose.

It appears in all the wills. Thus Wynflæd,

¹² Eddius, p. 89.

^{13 3} Gale Script. p. 395.

^{14 3} Gale Script. p. 428.

BOOK for her saul-sceat, gave to every one of the religious, at the places she mentions, a mancus of gold; and to another place, half a pound's worth, for saul-sceat. She adds a direction to her children, that they will illuminate for her soul.

> Byrhtric, for his soul and his ancestors, gave two sulings of land by his will, and a similar present, with thirty gold mancys, for his wife's soul and her ancestors. 15 Wulfaru bequeaths to Saint Peter's minster, for his "miserable soul," and for his ancestors, a bracelet, a patera, two golden crosses, with garments and bed-clothes, 16

> A Dux who flourished in the days of Edgar and Æthelred, not only gave an abbot some valuable lands, in return for his liberal hospitality, but also several others, with thirty marks of gold, and twenty pounds of silver, two golden crosses, two pieces of his cloak, set with gold and gems in valuable workmanship, and other things, that, if he fell in battle, his body might be buried with them. 17

> A Dux in Alfred's days directed one hundred swine to be given to a church in Canterbury, for him and for his soul; and the same to Chertsey abbey. The same dux directed two hundred peninga to be paid annually from some land to Chertsey abbey, for the soul of Alfred. 18

¹⁵ Hickes, Diss. Ep. 51.

¹⁶ Ibid. p. 54. 17. 3 Gale Script. 494.

²⁸ Test. Ælf. App. Sax. Dict.

So Æthelstan the ætheling gave to St. Peter's CHAP. church, at Westminster, land which he had bought of his father for two hundred mancusan of gold, five pounds of silver by weight, and some land, which he had purchased for two hundred and fifty gold mancus by weight; and the land which his father released to him, for both their souls: he makes other bequests to other religious places. 19

¹⁹ App. Sax. Dict. If the body was buried out of the "riht scire," or parish, the soul's sceat was to be paid to the minister to which he belonged. Wilk. Leg. 121. 108. It was to be always given at the open grave. Ib. 108.

BOOK VIII.

THE GOVERNMENT AND CONSTITUTION OF THE ANGLO-SAXONS.

CHAP. L.

The King's Election and Coronation.

BOOK IN treating of the Anglo-Saxon government it will be proper to begin with the cyning, or king, who, though he did not concentrate in himself the despotism of an eastern monarch, was yet elevated far above the rest of the nation in dignity, property, and power.

> THE witena-gemot may then be considered, and afterwards the official dignities respected by the nation. Our subject will be closed by a review of the contributions levied from the people.

> THE first cynings of the Anglo-Saxons seem to have been their war-kings, continued for life; and the crown was not hereditary, but elective. Many authors, both in the Anglo-Saxon times and afterwards, when speaking of their accessions, express them in terms which signify election. Thus, the contemporary au

thor of Dunstan's life says of Edwin, "after him CHAP arose Eadwig, son of king Edmund, in age a youth, and with little of the prudence of reigning; elected, he filled up the number and names of the kings over both people." It proceeds afterwards to mention, that, abandoning Eadwig, they chose (eligere) Eadgar to be king.

It was the witena-gemot who elected the cyning. The council, in 785, directs, that "lawful kings be chosen by the priests and elders of the people." The author of the life of Dunstan says, "when at the time appointed he was by all the chiefs of the English, by general election, to be anointed and consecrated king." Ethelred recites himself, in a charter, that all the optimates had unanimously chosen his brother Edward to rule the helm of the kingdom. Alfred is stated to have been chosen by the ducibus et presulibus of all the nation. Edward and Athelstan are also described as "a primatis electus."

Sometimes the election is mentioned as if other persons besides the witan were concerned in it. Thus, the Saxon Chronicle says, that after Ethelred's death all the witan who were in London, and the citizens, chose Edmund to 7 cinge.

^a MS. Cleop. B. 13. p. 76. 78.

² Spelm. Concil. p. 296.

³ MS. Cleop. p. 76.

⁴ MS. Claud. C. 9. p. 123.

⁵ Simeon Dunel. 126, 127.

⁶ Ethelwerd, 847. Malmsb. 48.

⁷ Sax. Chron. p. 148.

BOOK It says afterwards, that when Canute died there was a gemot of all the witan at Oxford; and earl Leofric, and most of the thegns north of the Thames, and the lithsmen at London chose Harold. The earl Godwin, and all the yldestan men in West Saxony, opposed it as long as they could. 8

> But, from the comparison of all the passages on this subject, the result seems to be, that the king was elected at the witena-gemot held on the demise of the preceding sovereign; and these citizens and lithsmen were probably the more popular part of the national council, the representatives of the cities and burghs. The name of lithsmen would suit those of the maritime burghs, afterwards, as now, called the cinque ports.

> THAT the accession of the Anglo-Saxon sovereigns was not governed by the rules of hereditary succession, is manifest from their history. The dynasties of Wessex were more steady and regular than any others in the octarchy. Yet the son of its third king, Cealwin, did not succeed, though he existed. The son of Ceolwulf was equally passed by. Ceadwalla left two sons, yet Ina acceded, to their prejudice; and, what is singular, Ina was elected king, though his father was alive. Some other irregularities of the same sort took place before Egbert, and continued after him.

¹ Sax. Chron. p. 154.

ETHELBERT, the second son of Ethelwulph, CHAP. left sons, and yet Ethelred succeeded in their stead. They were still excluded, when Alfred and his son received the crown. So Athelstan, though illegitimate, was chosen in preference to his legitimate brothers. On Edgar's death, both his eldest and youngest sons were made candidates for the crown, though Edward was preferred; and although Edmund Ironside left a son, his brother, Edward the Confessor, after the Danish reigns, was preferred before him. To the exclusion of the same prince, Harold the Second obtained his election.

But though the Saxon witan continued the custom of election, and sometimes broke the regular line of descent, by crowning the collateral branches, yet in the greatest number of instances they followed the rule of hereditary succession. Their choice of the cyning in Wessex, even when the heir was disregarded, was always made from the family of its first founder, Cerdic, and usually from the kinsmen of the preceding sovereign. The Norman conquest diminished the power of the witena-gemot in this respect, or at least restricted its practical exertion. The form and name of election continued, but it was rather adoption than choice. The crown passed gradually from an elective to an hereditary succession; -a change highly auspicious to the national prosperity, by precluding the most destructive of all human competitions.

THE coronation of Ethelred the Second, and

BOOK his coronation oath, have been transmitted to us in Latin, in a MS. yet extant in the Cotton Library.9 The ceremony was thus ordered: the translation is made literal: some part of it seems to be the composition or the arrangement of Dunstan .-

> "Two bishops, with the witan, shall lead him to the church, and the clergy, with the bishops, shall sing the anthem, 'Firmetur manus tua,' and the 'Gloria Patri.'

> "When the king arrives at the church, he shall prostrate himself before the altar, and the 'Te Deum' shall be chanted.

> "When this is finished, the king shall be raised from the ground, and, having been chosen by the bishops and people, shall, with a clear voice, before God and all the people, promise that he will observe these three rules."

" The Coronation Oath.

'In the name of Christ, I promise three things to the 'Christian people, my subjects:-

'First, That the church of God, and all the Christian people, shall always preserve true peace under our auspices.

Second, That I will forbid rapacity and all iniquities to

4 every condition.

- 'Third, That I will command equity and mercy in all ' judgments that to me and to you, the gracious and merciful ' God may extend his mercy.'
- "All shall say, Amen. These prayers shall follow, which the bishops are separately to repeat: -
- We invoke thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty and Eternal God, that this thy servant (whom, by the wisdom
- of thy divine dispensations from the beginning of his formation to this present day, thou hast permitted to increase,
- rejoicing in the flower of youth) enriched with the gift of

'thy piety, and full of the grace of truth, thou mayest cause to be always advancing, day by day, to better things before God and men: —That, rejoicing in the bounty of superand grace, he may receive the throne of supreme power; and defended on all sides from his enemies by the wall of thy mercy, he may deserve to govern happily the people committed to him with the peace of propitiation and the strength of victory.'

" Second Prayer.

'O God, who directest thy people in strength, and go'vernest them with love, give this thy servant such a spirit
'of wisdom with the rule of discipline, that, devoted to thee
'with his whole heart, he may remain in his government
'always fit, and that by thy favour the security of this church
'may be preserved in his time, and Christian devotion may
'remain in tranquillity; so that, persevering in good works,
'he may attain, under thy guidance, to thine everlasting
'kingdom.'

" After a third prayer, the consecration of the king by the bishop takes place, who holds the crown over him, saying,—

' Almighty Creator, Everlasting Lord, governor of heaven ' and earth, the maker and disposer of angels and men, 'King of kings and Lord of lords! who made thy faithful 'servant Abraham to triumph over his enemies, and gavest ' manifold victories to Moses and Joshua, the prelates of thy ' people; and didst raise David thy lowly child, to the summit of the kingdom, and didst free him from the mouth of the 'lion and the paws of the bear, and from Goliah, and from ' the malignant sword of Saul and his enemies; who didst endow Solomon with the ineffable gift of wisdom and peace: ' look down propitiously on our humble prayers, and multiply ' the gifts of thy blessing on this thy servant, whom, with ' humble devotion, we have chosen to be king of the Angles ' and the Saxons. Surround him every where with the right ' hand of thy power, that, strengthened with the faithfulness of Abraham, the meekness of Moses, the courage of ' Joshua, the humility of David, and the wisdom of Solo-'mon, he may be well-pleasing to thee in all things, and

воок VIII. ^c may always advance in the way of justice with inoffensive ^e progress.

- 'May he so nourish, teach, defend, and instruct the church of all the kingdom of the Anglo-Saxons, with the people 'annexed to it; and so potently and royally rule it against all visible and invisible enemies, that the royal throne of the 4 Angles and Saxons may not desert his sceptre, but that he 4 may keep their minds in the harmony of the pristine faith and peace! May he, supported by the due subjection of 4 the people, and glorified by worthy love, through a long life, descend to govern and establish it with the united mercy of 'thy glory! Defended with the helmet and invincible shield s of thy protection, and surrounded with celestial arms, may he obtain the triumph of victory over all his enemies, and bring the terror of his power on all the unfaithful, and shed peace on those joyfully fighting for thee! Adorn him with the virtues with which thou hast decorated thy faithful servants; place him high in his dominion, and anoint him with ' the oil of the grace of thy Holy Spirit!'
- "Here he shall be ANOINTED with oil; and this anthem shall be sung: —
- 'And Zadoc the priest, and Nathan the prophet, anointed 'Solomon king in Sion; and, approaching him, they said, 'May the king live for ever!'
- "After two appropriate prayers, the sword was given to him, with this invocation: —
- 'God! who governest all things, both in heaven and in earth, by thy providence, be propitious to our most Christian king, that all the strength of his enemies may be broken by the virtue of the spiritual sword, and that Thou combating for him, they may be utterly destroyed!'
- "The king shall here be CROWNED, and shall be thus addressed: -
- 'May God crown thee with the crown of glory, and with the honour of justice, and the labour of fortitude; that by the virtue of our benediction, and by a right faith, and the various fruit of good works, thou mayest attain to the crown of the everlasting kingdom, through His bounty whose king-

dom endures for ever!'

"After the crown shall be put upon his head, this prayer CHAP. shall be said: —

'God of eternity! Commander of the virtues! the Con'queror of all enemies! bless this thy servant, now humbly
bending his head before thee, and preserve him long in
health, prosperity, and happiness. Whenever he shall invoke thine aid, be speedily present to him, and protect and
defend him. Bestow on him the riches of thy grace; fulfil
his desires with every good thing, and crown him with thy
mercy.'

"The SCEPTRE shall be here given to him, with this address: -

'Take the illustrious sceptre of the royal power, the rod of thy dominion, the rod of justice, by which mayest thou govern thyself well, and the holy church and Christian people committed by the Lord to thee! Mayest thou with royal virtue defend us from the wicked; correct the bad, and pacify the upright; and that they may hold the right way, direct them with thine aid, so that from the temporal kingdom thou mayest attain to that which is eternal, by His aid whose endless dominion will remain through every age!

" After the sceptre has been given, this prayer follows:-

Lord of all! Fountain of good! God of all! Governor of governors! bestow on thy servant the dignity to govern well, and strengthen him, that he become the honour granted him by thee! Make him illustrious above every other king in Britain! Enrich him with thine affluent benediction, and establish him firmly in the throne of his kingdom! Visit him in his offspring, and grant him length of life! In his day may justice be pre-eminent, so that, with all joy and felicity, he may be glorified in thine everlasting kingdom!

"The Rop shall be here given to him, with this address :-

'Take the rod of justice and equity, by which thou mayest understand how to soothe the pious and terrify the bad; teach the way to the erring; stretch out the hand to the faltering; abase the proud; exalt the humble, that Christ our Lord may open to thee the door, who says of himself, 'I am the door; if any enter through me, he shall be

BOOK VIII.

' saved.' And HE who is the key of David, and the sceptre of the house of Israel, who opens and no one can shut; who shuts and no one can open; may he be thy helper! HE who bringeth the bounden from the prison-house, and the one sitting in darkness and the shadow of death! that in all things thou mayest deserve to follow him of whom David sang, 'Thy seat, O God, endureth for ever; the sceptre of 'thy kingdom is a right sceptre.' Imitate him who says, 'Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; there-'fore God, even thy God, has anointed thee with the oil

"The benedictions follow:

" of gladness above thy fellows."

'May the Almighty Lord extend the right hand of his blessing, and pour upon thee the gift of his protection, and surround thee with a wall of happiness, and with the guardianship of his care; the merits of the holy Mary; of Saint Peter, the prince of the apostles; and of Saint Gregory, the apostle of the English; and of all the Saints, interceding for thee!

'May the Lord forgive thee all the evil thou hast done, and bestow on thee the grace and mercy which thou humbly askest of him; may he free thee from all adversity, and from all the assaults of visible or invisible enemies!

'May he place his good angels to watch over thee, that they always and every where may precede, accompany, and follow thee; and by his power may he preserve thee from sin, from the sword, and every accident and danger!

'May he convert thine enemies to the benignity of peace and love, and make thee gracious and amiable in every good thing; and may he cover those that persecute and hate thee with salutary confusion; and may everlasting sanctification flourish upon thee!

May he always make thee victorious and triumphant over thine enemies, visible or invisible; and pour upon thy heart both the fear and the continual love of his holy name, and make thee persevere in the right faith and in good works; granting thee peace in thy days, and with the palm of victory may he bring thee to an endless reign!

And may he make them happy in this world, and the partakers of his everlasting felicity, who have willed to make thee king over his people!

Bless, Lord, this elected prince, thou who rulest for ever CHAP.

'And so glorify him with thy blessing, that he may hold the sceptre of Solomon with the sublimity of a 'David,' &c.

'Grant him, by thy inspiration, so to govern thy people, as thou didst permit Solomon to obtain a peaceful king-dom.'

" Designation of the State of the Kingdom.

'Stand and retain now the state which thou hast hitherto
'held by paternal succession, with hereditary right, delegated to thee by the authority of Almighty God, and our
'present delivery, that is, of all the bishops and other servants of God; and in so much as thou hast beheld the clergy
nearer the sacred altars, so much more remember to pay
them the honour due, in suitable places. So may the
Mediator of God and men confirm thee the mediator of
the clergy and the common people, on the throne of this
kingdom, and make thee reign with him in his eternal
kingdom.'

This prayer follows:

'May the Almighty Lord give thee, from the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, abundance of corn, wine, and oil! May the people serve thee, and the tribes adore thee! Be the lord of thy brothers, and let the sons of thy mother bow before thee: He who blesses thee shall be filled with blessings, and God will be thy helper: May the Almighty bless thee with the blessings of the heaven above, and in the mountains and the vallies; with the blessing of the deep below; with the blessing of the suckling and the womb; with the blessings of grapes and apples; and may the blessing of the ancient fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, be heaped upon thee!

'Bless, Lord, the courage of this prince, and prosper the works of his hands; and by thy blessing may his land be filled with apples, with the fruits, and the dew of heaven, and of the deep below; with the fruit of the sun and moon; from the top of the ancient mountains, from the apples of

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BOOK the eternal hills, and from the fruits of the earth and its fulness!

> ' May the blessing of Him who appeared in the bush come ' upon his head, and may the full blessing of the Lord be upon his sons, and may he steep his feet in oil.

> With his horn, as the horn of the rhinoceros, may he scatter the nations to the extremities of the earth; and may He who has ascended to the skies be his auxiliary for ever!'

" Here the coronation ends."

CHAP. II.

His Family and Officers.

THE Anglo-Saxon queen was crowned, as CHAP. well as the king, until the reign of Egbert, when this honour was taken from her. The crimes of the preceding queen Eadburga, occasioned the Anglo-Saxons to depart awhile, in this respect, from the custom of all the German nations. But it was soon restored; for Ethelwulph, on his second marriage, suffered his queen, Judith, to be crowned. An account of the ceremony of her coronation has been preserved by the old Frankish writers.

The custom was not immediately reassumed in England, because the expressions of Asser imply, that in Alfred's time the disuse of the coronation continued. But, by the time of the second Ethelred, it was restored; for after the account of his coronation, the ceremonial of her coronation follows. — She was anointed, and, after a prayer, a ring was given to her, and then she was crowned.³

^{*} Asser, Vit. Alfr. p. 10, 11.

It may be seen in Du Chesne's Collection of the Frankish Historians, tom ii. p. 423.

³ Cott. MS. Claud. A. S.

BOOK THE queen's name is joined with the cyning's in some charters, and it is not unusual to find them signed by her. From them we learn that she often sat in the witena-gemot, even after she became queen-dowager. She had her separate property; for, in a gift of land by Ethelswitha, the queen of Alfred, she gives fifteen manentes, calling them a part of the land of her own power. She had also officers of her own household; for the persons, with whose consent and testimony she made the grant, are called her nobles.

> THE king's sons had lands appropriated for them, even though under age; for Ethelred says, that, on his brother being elected king, "the nobles delivered to me, for my use, the lands belonging to the king's sons;" these, on the death of the princes, or on their accession to the sovereignty, became the property of the king; for, he adds, "my brother dying, I assumed the dominion, both of the royal lands. and of those belonging to the king's sons." 5

> Among the royal household we find the disc thegn, or the thegn of his dishes; the hregal thegn, or the thegn of his wardrobe; his hors thegn, or the thegn of his stud; his camerarius, or chamberlain; his propincenarius and pincerna, or cup-bearer; his secretaries; his chancellor; and, in an humbler rank, his mæg-

⁴ MS. Claud. C. 9. p. 105.

den, his grindende theowa, his fedesl, his am- CHAP. biht-smith, his horswealh, his geneat, and his laadrinc. But we may remark, that his cupbearer and feeder, or probably taster, were both females. The executive officers of his government will be mentioned hereafter.

CHAP. III.

The Dignity and Prerogatives of the Anglo-Saxon Cyning.

BOOK VIII.

FIVE descriptions of kings have appeared in the world: the FATHER at the head of his family; the most ancient sovereign, once exhibited in the Jewish Patriarch, but now perhaps obsolete, unless in the simplicity of some portions of Africa. The ELDER, governing his descendants and tribe rather by influence and persuasion than power, as the North American sachems; the Arabian sheiks; and some Tartarian hordes. The IMPERATOR, or military sovereign, commanding among his people as among his soldiers, like the emperors of Rome. The DESPOT LORD, ruling his nation like his vassal slaves, without check, sympathy, consideration, or responsibility. like the shereffs of Morocco, the dev of Algiers, and, in a great measure, the sultans of Turkey: and the Teutonic Kings, who are neither fathers, elders, imperators, nor despotic lords, but who are a creation of social wisdom far more excellent in conception, and more beneficial in practice than either of the rest. The father king must cease to exist when the family becomes a

tribe. The elder king, who then succeeds, suits of the proof of the elder king, and extensively-spread nation. The imperator or the despot lord must then be resorted to, or tyrannical oligarchies, severe aristocracies, or factious democracies must be substituted; or else an anomalous and discordant, and not lasting combination of some of these forms; which was attempted at Athens, Carthage, Rome, and Sparta, with no permanent advantage, or possibility of long continuance.

THE experience and sagacity of the ancient world went no farther than to use one or other. of these institutions. It was reserved for those whom we unjustly call Barbarians, the descendants of the Scythian, Gothic, or Teutonic nomades, to invent, and to reduce to practice a form of monarchy, under the name of kings, with powers so great, yet so limited; so superior and independent in the theory of law, and yet so subordinate to it, and so governed by it; so majestic, yet so popular; so dignified, yet so watched; so intrusted, yet so criticised; so powerful, yet so counteracted; so honoured, yet so counselled; so wealthy, yet so dependent, that all the good which sovereignty can impart is enjoyed largely by the nations whomthey sway, with as few as possible of the evils. which continued power must always tend to occasion, and which no human wisdom, while the executing instruments of its plans are im-

BOOK perfect mortals, can absolutely prevent. Such an institution was the Anglo-Saxon cyning; and such, with all the improvements which a freespirited nation has at various times added to it, is the British monarchy under which we are now reposing.

THE Anglo-Saxon cyning reigned, as his kingly successors reign, by no divine right. His office was the invention; his appointment was the election, of his people, as the succession of our present sovereigns is the ordination of law made by all the orders of the people in their great united parliamentary council. But religion has wisely taught us to consider the reigning sovereign as a consecrated functionary; not to give him the right divine of doing wrong, but to guard his person and character, for the sake of that welfare of the society for which they were created, with all the veneration which can be obtained from human sympathies; and with all that attachment which will most effectually promote the utility of his great office. Hence he was, as already shown, anointed, prayed for, and said to reign by the grace of God. Hence violence to his person has been always considered as a species of sacrilege. Hence, without adopting the impious deification of the Roman emperors, or the analogous adulation with which those of China and the East are to their own moral prejudice surrounded, our kings have been always considered with a degree of

religious' as well as civil respect, enough to CHAP. raise them above every other class of society in character as well as dignity and prerogative, but not enough to emancipate them from all legal obligations, nor to elevate them above that law to which both sovereign and people are equally subject. That this state of subordination to the laws was the principle of the Anglo-Saxon royalty we may safely infer from the emphatic words of our ancient and venerable Bracton. The Norman kings were certainly not inferior in power or prerogative to the Anglo-Saxon; yet of the kingly power in his day, that of Henry the Third, and viewing it as connected with the usages of what then was English antiquity, he says,-

"KINGS ought not to be under man, but under God, AND THE LAW, because THE LAW MAKES THE KING. The King ascribes to the Law what the Law ascribes to him, that is, dignity and power: for he is not King where his will governs, and not the Law.²

"The KING has a superior, God; ALSO THE LAW, BY WHICH HE IS MADE KING; also this court, that is, of the earls and barons (the parliament); therefore, if the King should be without a bridle, that is, without Law, They ought

to put a bridle upon Him.3

"The English laws are not whatever is rashly presumed from the will of the King; but what, with the intention of establishing laws, shall be rightly determined by the council of his magistrates (the parliament), the King presiding in authority, and in the deliberation and discussion having been had upon this subject." 4

¹ Hence Bracton calls the king the Vicarius Dei, p. 5. The minister and vicarius of God, p. 55.

³ Bracton, p. 5. ³ Ibid. p. 34. ⁴ Ibid. p. 107.

BOOK VIII. So our ancient law-book, Fleta, written under the successful and powerful Edward the First, thus expresses the same ideas, imitating or copying its predecessor;

"The King has superiors in ruling the people; as, THE LAW, by which he is made King; and his court, that is, the earls and barons," meaning by these, the parliament.

"The King ought not to have an equal in his kingdom; for an equal has no government over an equal: nor ought he to have any superior but God and the law. And because by the law he is made King, it is fit that domination and power should be ascribed to the Law, and should be defended by him on whom the law has bestowed honour and power. He governs badly when a will shall govern in him dissonant to the law." 6

"He is not called King from reigning, but the name is assumed from well-governing. He is a King while he governs well; but a Tyrant when he oppresses his people by his violated domination."

"To this He is elected that he may cause justice to be exhibited equally to all who are subject to him, accepting the person of no one: that in him the Lord may sit, and by him decree judgment. It concerns him to defend and sustain what shall be justly judged, because if there was not one who would do justice, peace would easily be exterminated. 8

"He has the power of coercion, that he may punish and restrain the delinquents; and have it in his power to make the laws, customs, and assizes provided, approved, and sworn in his kingdom, to be firmly observed BY HIMSELF and all his subjects." 9

"He ought to excel all in his kingdom in power, because He ought not to have a peer, and much more a superior in administering justice. Yet, though he excel all in power, his heart should be in the hand of God; and that his power may not remain unbridled, let him apply the bridle of temperance and the reins of moderation, that HE be not drawn

⁵ Fleta, Proemium.

⁷ Ibid. p. 16.

^{*} Ibid.

⁶ Fleta, p. 2.

⁹ Ibid.

to do injury, who can do nothing in the land BUT WHAT HE CHAP.

" For this HE IS CREATED AND CHOSEN KING that he may do justice to all." 11

It is in the same strain that our judge Fortescue writes, in the reign of Henry the Sixth:

"The King of England cannot change the laws of his kingdom at his will."

"He cannot change the laws without the assent of his subjects; nor burthen his people with strange impositions."

"The statutes of England cannot thus arise, since they are not from the will of the prince, but by the assent of the whole kingdom."

"They are not made by the prudence of one man; or of an hundred counsellors; but of more than three hundred chosen men; as those who know the form of the parliament of England, and the order and manner of its 15 convocation.

"Nor can the King, by himself, or his ministers, impose talliages or subsidies, or any other burthens on his liege people; or change their laws, or establish new ones, without the concession and assent of all his kingdom, expressed in parliament." 16

It is in the same spirit, and obviously implying the same principles which these lawyers of Henry the Third, Edward the First, and Henry the Sixth, have expressed more at large, that the still more ancient Glanville, under Henry the Second, in his very short treatise, takes also occasion to say:

"It will not seem absurd that those English laws should be called LAWS, although not written, which have been pro-

¹⁰ Fleta, p. 16.

¹² Ibid. p. 18.

¹² Fortescue, p. 25.

¹³ Ibid. p. 26. ¹⁴ Ibid. p. 40.

¹⁵ Ibid. p. 40.

²⁶ Ibid. p. 84.

BOOK mulgated on doubtful things, and in council determined by the advice of the proceses, and acceding authority of the prince." 17

> From this passage we perceive that these unwritten laws were not mere customs, as the common law of England has been sometimes erroneously called, but the actual enactments of the national council of England; and as these principles, from which the ancient interpreters of the law deduced their statements of the royal and parliamentary power in England, are not likely to have originated after the Norman conquest, we may consider them as describing to us some important features of the Anglo-Saxon cyning, and of the Anglo-Saxon witena-gemots.

> WE will now proceed to collect more distinctly some of the chief traits of the dignity and prerogatives of the cyning, which the Anglo-Saxon remains have preserved for our curiosity.

> THE authorities already adduced on the nature of the government of the Saxons on the Continent, lead us to infer, that when Hengist, Ella, Cerdic, and Ida invaded Britain, they and the other chiefs who succeeded in establishing themselves in the island, came with the rank of war-kings, whose power was to continue while hostilities existed.

> But to rule a territory extorted by violence from angry natives, who were perpetually struggling to regain it, could scarcely admit of any

deposition of the kingly office. The same power CHAP. and dignity which were requisite to obtain victory, were equally wanted, while the hostility lasted, to preserve its conquests. It is, therefore, probable, that the first Anglo-Saxon chieftains and their successors were, from necessity and utility, continued on the throne till the kingly dignity became an established, a legal, and a venerated institution.

THE circumstance, that these war-kings and their associates invaded and conquered the dominions of petty British kings, was also favourable to the establishment of continued royalty. When the British king fell, or retreated before the Saxon war-king, all his advantages became the spoil of his conquerors. The Saxon chief naturally succeeded to the British, the Saxon nobles to the British nobles, and the other invading warriors to the possessions of the free part of the native community.

It is certain, that in the earliest periods of the Anglo-Saxon history, we find the cyning, or king, and all the four orders of noble, free, freed, and servile. Their conversion to Christianity introduced another class, of monks and clergy.

THE power and prerogatives of the Anglo-Saxon cyning were progressively acquired. As the nation had no written constitution, their government was that of ancient custom, gradually altered from its original features by the new circumstances which occurred. In the

BOOK course of time, the augmentation of the power of the cyning became indispensable to the happiness of the nation. What could arrange the contentions of right, property, and power, between equal nobles, or between them and the free, and afterwards between them and the church; what could protect the infant state from British hostility, ever jealous, ever bickering, and ever to be mistrusted, but such an institution as continued royalty - as a cyning, raised in dignity and power above all the other chieftains; who could see the laws of the society executed, and their various rights adjusted; to whom every rank could effectually appeal, and who was the protector of every order of the state from violence and wrong?

> WE have seen that the land swarmed with independent land proprietors of various denominations, whose privileges were not uniform; but whose jurisdictions were generally peculiar and independent. What but a king could, in their age, and with their customs, have rescued the nation from a New Zealand state of general warfare? The institution of the cyning was, therefore, an admirable device, adapted to promote the common interest. It maintained peace between the turbulent chieftains. It insured to every order the enjoyment of its immunities. It was the source whence legal justice was administered to all; and perhaps no single incident tended more to accelerate the Anglo-Saxon civilisation, than the character and pre

rogatives of the cyning, moderated by the concern chap. tinuance of the witena-gemots, and the free spirit of the people.

It is extremely difficult to describe accurately his privileges and his power. It is remarked by Tacitus, as peculiar to the German nations, that the power of their kings was neither unlimited nor free 18; and that the chieftains governed rather by influence than command. They could neither punish, fetter, nor lash: priests only had these powers, and these severities were submitted to from them as the inflictions of their 19 gods. The ancient Saxons having no king but in war time, his power could be but temporary; and when it became more permanent must have been much restricted. As the supreme chief of many other chieftains, whose rights were as sacred as his dignity may have been popular, his authority must have been circumscribed by others. Much of his power at first depended on his personal character and talents. Thus Eadbald had less authority in Kent than his father 20; while Edwin, in Northumbria, attained to such power that he had the banner carried before him, not only in battle, but also in his excursions with his ministers through his kingdom, which seems to have been an assumption of dignity and state unknown before. 21 So, Oswin was so beloved for his

¹⁸ Nec regibus infinita; nec libera potestas. Mor. Germ.

²⁹ Ibid. 20 Bede, lib. ii. c. 6. 11 Ibid. c. 16:

BOOK amiable conduct, that the noblest men of his provinces came from every part to attend and serve him.23

The growth of the kingly prerogatives was favoured not only by the energy and talents of the prosperous sovereigns, but also by the natural tendency of such a power to accumulate. The crown was a permanent establishment, which it was the interest of every one but the superior nobles, to maintain and to aggrandize, till its power became formidable enough to be felt in its oppressions. Its domains were increasing by every successful war, and its revenue, privileges, and munificence, were perpetually adding to its wealth and influence.

When the zeal of the popes had completed the conversion of the island, and an hierarchy was established, the kingly power received great support and augmentation from the religious veneration with which the clergy surrounded it. That the church, in its weakness, should support the crown, which was its best protector, was a circumstance as natural as that it should afterwards oppose it, when its aggressions became feared,

The laws of Ethelbert, the first Christian king of Kent, who was converted about 600, are the most ancient specimens of the Anglo-Saxon legislation which remain to us. In these ²³, the cyning appears already distinguished by a su-

²³ Bede, lib. iii. c. 14. ²³ Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 1—7.

perior rank and privileges. While the mundbyrd of a ceorl was valued at six scillinga, the king's was appointed at fifty. The mulct on homicide in an eorle's residence was twelve scillinga; in a king's fifty. A double penalty was inflicted for injuries done where the cyning was drinking. An offence with his female was punished by a fine of fifty scillinga, while the eorle's occasioned only twelve, and a ceorl's but six. So, though a freeman's theft from a freeman incurred a treble satisfaction, his purloining the king's property was to be nine times compensated.

Another impressive and profitable token of superiority was, that some of the mulcts on offences were paid to him. Thus, if any harm was done to the leode, or people, when the king called them together, the compensation was to be double, and fifty scillinga were to be paid to the king. If any one killed a free man, the king had a similar sum as his lord. If a free man stole from others of the same condition, the penalty was to be the king's. If a pregnant woman was forced away, the king had fifteen scillinga.

In the laws of Ina, we see the cyning mentioned in a style of authority very much resembling that of subsequent sovereigns. He says, "I, Ina, by the grace of God, king of the West Saxons." He uses the phrase "my bishops." He calls the nobles "my ealdormen," and "the oldest sages of my people." He

BOOK VIII. adds, "I was consulting on the health of our soul and the establishment of our kingdom, that right laws, and right cyne domas (kingly judgments), through our people, might be settled and confirmed, and that no ealdorman, and none of our subjects should violate our laws." The laws then are introduced with "We command." 24

ONE of the provisions in these laws shows the king in the same authoritative and dignified features. "If any one fight in the king's house, he shall forfeit all his property, and it shall remain for the king's decision whether he shall have his life or not." 25 The difference between this offence and quarrels elsewhere was very great; for a battle in the church, and in an ealdorman's house, was punished by a fine of 120 scillinga only.

The epithets given by the pope to the first Christian king of the Anglo-Saxons were, "the glorious," and "the most glorious." In several of their letters, the phrase "Your glory" is used as synonimous with our expression of "your majesty." The same epithet of "most glorious" is applied by Aldhelm to the king of Cornwall, and, by an abbot, to the Frankish king. ²⁶ But this epithet was rather the complimentary language of the day, than a phrase appropriated to royalty; for Alphuald, king of East Anglia,

²⁴ Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 14. ²⁵ Ibid. p. 16.

²⁶ Bonif. Letters, 16 Mag Bib. 65. 85.

writing to Boniface, styles the mitred missionary, CHAP. "Domino gloriosissimo." A pope, in 634, addresses the king of Northumbria as Your Excellency. Boniface, to the king of Mercia, says, "We intreat the clemency of your highness." On another occasion, his superscription is more rhetorical: " To Ethelbald, king, my dearest lord, and in the love of Christ to be preferred to other kings, governing the illustrious sceptre of the empire of the Angles." Another address of the same sort in Saxon occurs in a monk's dedication of a saint's life; " To my most loved lord above the earthly kings of all other men, Alfwold, king of the East Angles, ruling his kingdom with right and with dignity." 28

The titles which the ancient Saxon kings assumed in their charters may be briefly noticed:

—"I, Æthelbald, by the divine dispensation, king of the Mercians." The powerful Offa simply writes, "Offa, king of the Mercians." Another; "Kenulph, by God's mercy, king of the Mercians." Witlaf's, Burtulph's, and Beorred's, are as unassuming. In the same spirit, Ethelwulph calls himself merely Rex West Saxonum. The style in which Edgar chose to be mentioned, is usually very pompous and rhetorical.

ALFRED's exordium to his laws is as dignified

²⁷ Bonif. Letters, 16 Mag. Bib.

²⁸ MS. Vita S. Guthlaci. Cott. Lib.

VIII.

BOOK as Ina's: "I, Alfred, cyning, gathered together and have commanded to be written, many of those things that our forefathers held which pleased me; and, many of those things that liked me not, I have thrown aside, with the advice of my witan, and other things have commanded to be holden." 29

> THE subsequent kings, in the same manner, promulged the laws in their own name, with the advice of their witan.

> THE prerogatives and influence in society of the cyning were great. He was to be prayed for, and voluntarily honoured 30; his word was to be taken without an oath 31; he had the high prerogative of pardoning in certain 32 cases; his mund-byrd and his Were were larger than those of any other class in society 33; his safety was protected by high penalties for offences committed in his presence or habitation, or against his family 34; he had the lordship of the free 35; he had the option to sell over sea, to kill, or to take the were of a freeman thief; also to sell a theow over sea, or take a 36 penalty; he could mitigate penalties 37; and could remit them 38; he had a sele, or tribunal, before whom thieves were brought 39; he had a tribunal in London 40; his tribunal was the last court of

²⁹ Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 34. 3º Ibid. p. 10. 3x Ibid. p. 11. 3x Ibid. p. 20. 65. 33 Ibid. 71, 72.

³⁴ Ibid. 22. 35. Ibid. 2. 36 Ibid. 12.

³⁷ Ibid. 77. ³⁸ Spelm. Conc. p. 485.

³⁹ Wilk. Leg. Sax. 8. 4º Ibid. p. 10.

appeal ⁴¹; he was the executive superintendant CHAP. of the general laws, and usually received the fines attached to crimes. ⁴² The Jews were his property ⁴³; the high executive officers, the ealdormen, the gerefas, the thegns, and others, were liable to be displaced by him. ⁴⁴ He convoked the councils of the witan ⁴⁵, and summoned the people to the army, which he commanded.

In the Saxon book of constitutions, he is thus spoken of: "The king should be in the place of a father to his people; and, in vigilance and guardianship, a viceroy of Christ, as he is called. It belongs to him and all his family to love Christianity, and shun heathenism. He should respect and defend the church, and tranquillize and conciliate his people by right laws, and by him happiness will be increased. He loves right and avoids what is not so. 46

⁴¹ Domesday in loc. ⁴² Heming. Chart. 1. p. 265

⁴³ Wilk. Leg. Sax. 203. 44 Ibid. 109. 122.

⁴⁵ Ibid. 109.

⁴⁶ Wilk. Leg. p. 147. The exhortations which Alcuin gives to a king of Northumbria, will show what the Anglo-Saxons expected or desired their kings to be. After reminding him that man cannot perish like an animal, but must live somewhere else for ever, and happily or miserably according to his actions here, he adds:—

[&]quot;Love not unjust riches, for all injustice is avenged by God. It is the duty of a king to repress all iniquities by his power, to be just in his judgment, and prone to mercy. God will be merciful to him, according as he shows mercy to his subjects. Let him be sober in his morals, true in his words, liberal in his gifts, provident in his councils Let him



His property, on the dissolution of the octarchy, was very extensive in every part of England. Just before Alfred acceded to the crown, there were four kings reigning over the Anglo-Saxons;—the kings of Wessex, Mercia, East Anglia, and Northumbria. These four sovereignties had absorbed the other four. But when the sword of the Northmen had destroyed the dynasties of Mercia, East Anglia, and Northumbria, and when the invaders had themselves bent to the power of Alfred, then the Anglo-Saxon cyning rose into great power and property, because the royal power and property of the subdued kingdoms became the right of the ruling king. Alfred united in himself all the

choose prudent ministers, who fear God and lead an honourable life. He must not covet another's inheritance, nor indulge in avarice, nor in rapine. Often by rapine he loses his own possessions; for the Supreme hears the groans of the oppressed.

"You have seen how the kings your predecessors have perished from their injustice, their rapines, and their profligacy. Dread their ruin. The same God surveys your actions who did not spare their crimes. Many desired to amass supplies by violence and iniquities, and did not foresee that by this conduct they would lose the comfort both of this world and the future. Cultivate their peace, beingnity, mercy, justice, and virtue." Ep. 1538.

In another letter to him he says: -

"It does not become you on a throne to live with rustic manners. Anger should not govern you, but reason. Mercy will make you amiable, and cruelty hateful. Let truth only be heard from your mouth. Be chaste, sober, and reputable. Be free in giving, and not covetous in receiving. Let justice adorn your actions, and the form of honourable demeanour distinguish you to all who see you." P. 1554.

regal possessions in England, except those which he allowed the Danish princes to retain in Northumbria and East Anglia. The Northmen were completely subdued by Athelstan; and, when this event took place, the cyning of England became the possessor of all the prerogatives and property which the eight kings of the octarchy had enjoyed. It was this concentration of wealth and privileges, and its consequences, which exalted the cyning to that majesty and power which, in the later periods of the Anglo-Saxon dynasty, became attached to the throne.

The royal property consisted of lands in demesne in every part of England; and though in the lapse of time he had given large possessions to his friends and followers, yet from many he reserved rents and services which were a great source of wealth and power. The places which occur with the denomination of royal towns, or royal villas, are very numerous, and among these we may notice the name of Windeshore (Windsor), which is still a regal residence.

His revenues were the rents and produce of his lands in demesne; customs in the sea-ports; tolls in the markets, and in the cities on sales; duties and services to be paid to him in the burghs, or to be commuted for money; wites, or penalties and forfeitures, which the law attached to certain crimes and offences; heriots from his thanes, and various payments and

BOOK benefits arising to him on the circumstances stated in the laws.

> His dignity and influence were displayed and upheld by his liberality, of which specimens will be given in another place.

But all the prerogatives and rights of the Anglo-Saxon cyning were definite and ascertained. They were such as had become established by law or custom, and could be as little exceeded by the sovereign, as withheld by his people. They were not arbitrary privileges of an unknown extent. Even William the Conqueror found it necessary to have an official survey of the royal rights taken in every part of the kingdom; and we find the hundred, or similar bodies, in every county, making the inquisition to the king's commissioners, who returned to the sovereign that minute record of his claims upon his subjects, which constitutes the Domesday-book. The royal claims in Domesday-book were, therefore, not the arbitrary impositions of the throne, but were those which the people themselves testified to their king to have been his legal rights. Perhaps no country in Europe can exhibit such an ancient record of the freedom of its people, and the limited prerogatives of its ruler.

THE military force was under the command of the king, while it was assembled. It was rather a militia than a regular army. We have already given some notices of its nature: from

a certain quantity of land, a fixed number of CHAP. soldiers were sent, when the king summoned his people to an expedition, who were bound to serve under him for a certain time, apparently two months. Thus, in Berkshire, "when the king sent any where his army, one soldier went from every five hides, and for his victuals or his pay every hide gave him four shillings for two months. This money was not transmitted to the king, but to the soldiers. If any one, after he was summoned to the expedition, did not go, he forfeited to the king all his land. If any who had the right of staying at home promised to send a substitute, and the substitute did not go, the penalty was fifty shillings." In Wiltshire, "When the king went on an expedition by land or sea, he had from Wilton burgh either twenty shillings to feed his buzecarlos, or led one man with him for the honour of five hides." A curious instance of tenure on military service occurs in Heming's Chartularium. The prior of a monastery gave a villa to a miles for life, on condition of his serving for the monastery for it, in the expeditions by sea and land, which then frequently took place.

By the laws persons were forbidden to join the fyrd, or expedition, without the king's leave. To depart from it without permission, when the king commanded, was still more severely punished. The loss of life, and the forfeiture of all the offender's property, was the consequence. BOOK VIII.

THE scip fyrd, or naval expedition, was ordered to be always so accelerated as to be ready every year soon after Easter.

IT was enacted, that whoever destroyed or injured the people's fyrd scip should carefully compensate it, and to the king the mund. 47

So early as in the time of Ina, it was provided, that if a sith-cund man, having land, neglected the fyrd, he should pay one hundred and twenty shillings, and forfeit his land. If he had no land, he was to pay sixty shillings. A ceorl paid thirty shillings as a fyrd-wite. 48

In this obligation of military service attached to lands, we see the leading principle of the feudal system. Its next principle was that of doing homage to the superior from whom they were held. Did the Anglo-Saxons perform the act of homage? I have met with one passage which implies it. The head of a monastery, finding he could not prevail against an opposing bishop, sought Wulstan as a protector and did homage to him. 49

⁴⁷ Wilk. Leg. Sax. 122. 48 Ibid. 23.

⁴⁹ Petiit Wulstanum fecit que sibi homagium. 3 Gale Script. 482.

CHAP. IV.

The Witena-Gemot, or Anglo-Saxon Parliament, and of whom composed.

THE gemot of the witan was the great CHAP council of the Anglo-Saxon nation; their parliament, or legislative and supreme judicial assembly. As the highest judicial court of the kingdom, it resembled our present House of Lords. And in those periods, when the peers of the realm represented territorial property rather than hereditary dignities, the comparison between the Saxon witena-gemot and the upper house of our modern parliament might have been more correctly made in their legislative capacity. As the German states are recorded by Tacitus to have had national councils 1, so the continental Saxons are also stated to have possessed them. 2

If we had no other evidence of the political wisdom of our Gothic or Teutonic ancestors than their institution of the witena-gemots, or national parliaments, this happy and wise invention would be sufficient to entitle them to our

¹ Tacitus de Morib. Germ.

² Fabricius Hist. Sax. 64. 69. Chronographus Saxo. p. 115.

BOOK veneration and gratitude. For they have not only given to government a form, energy, and direction more promotive of the happiness of mankind than any other species of it has exhibited, but they are the most admirable provision for adapting its exercise and continuance to all the new circumstances ever arising of society, and for suiting and favouring its continual progress.

Or these assemblies, originating amid the woods and migrations of the Teutonic tribes, one important use has been, to remove from the nation that has possessed and preserved them, the reproach, the bondage, and the misery of an immutable legislation. The Medes and Persians made it their right that their laws should never be changed; not even to be improved. This truly barbaric conception, a favourite dogma also with the kingly priests, or priestly kings of the Nile, and even at Lacedemon, could only operate to curtail society of its fair growth, and to bind all future ages to be as imperfect as the past. It may produce such a political and intellectual monstrosity as Egypt long exhibited, and force a nation to remain a piece of mechanism of by-gone absurdity. But internal degradation and discomfort, external weakness, and national inferiority and decay, are the certain accompaniments of a polity so violent and unnatural.

INSTEAD of thus making the times of ignorance, national infancy, and incipient experience the standard and the laws of a country's future CHAP. manhood, the Anglo-Saxon witena-gemot or parliament was a wise and parental law-giver; not bound in the chains of an obsolete antiquity, but always presiding with a nurturing care; always living, feeling, and acting with the population and circumstances of the day, and providing such regulations, either by alterations of former laws, or by the additions of new ones, as the vicissitudes, novelties, wants, improvement, sentiment, situation, and interest of its co-existing society, in its various classes, were found to be continually needing: sometimes legislating for the benefit of the rich, or the great, or the clergy, or the commercial, or the agriculturist; sometimes for the middling and lower orders; and sometimes collectively for all. Open to petitions, stating the grievances from which certain classes or individuals occasionally suffer, and acquiring thus a knowledge of the wants and feelings of society, which no vigilance of its own or of government could by other means obtain: ready to enact new laws, as manifest evils suggest and reasoning wisdom patronises, an English parliament, with all its imperfections, many perhaps inevitable, is, I speak with reverence, and only use the expression from the want of another as meaning, the nearest human imitation of a superintending Providence, which our necessities or our sagacity have yet produced or devised. The right of petitioning brings before it all the evils, real or

BOOK imaginary, that affect the population which it guards; and the popular part being new-chosen at reasonable intervals, from the most educated orders of society, is perpetually renewed with its best talents, and, what is not less valuable, its living and contemporaneous feelings, fears, hopes, and tendencies. No despotic government, however pure and wise, can have these advantages. It cannot so effectually know what its subjects want. It cannot so well judge what they ought to obtain. It cannot so completely harmonise with the sympathies and flowing mind of the day, because its majesty precludes the acquisition of such identity as a septennial or hexennial election infuses. Whether new members are chosen, or old ones are re-elected, in both cases the election bespeaks their affinity with the hearts and understandings that surround them, and provides this security for a kind, vigilant, and improved legislation more effectually than any other system has yet imparted. Our Anglo-Saxon ancestors had all these advantages, though the peculiar state of their society prevented them from having that full benefit of such a noble institution as we now enjoy. But they were petitioned, and they legislated, and the dom-boc or laws, of every Anglo-Saxon reign that has survived to us, contains some improvements on the preceding. Some of their members were also most probably chosen like our own august parliament. The noble tree was then planted and growing, and

had begun to produce fruit; though it had not CHAP. obtained the majestic strength and dilation, and the beauty and fertility of that which now overshadows, protects, and distinguishes the British islands and their dependencies.

But this excellence our Anglo-Saxon parliaments certainly possessed, that they contained the collected feelings and mind of all the classes of the nation, except of the enslaved. The king was always an integral part of their constitution. He summoned, he addressed them; his concurrence was always necessary to their legislation, and he was the organ of its execution. The noble proprietors of land, and of the dignities annexed to it or flowing from it, were also essential members, and sometimes the most powerful. The gentry or thegns, knights, and the official dignities, were there; and the chiefs of the clergy, who had landed property. The bishops and abbots were always a constituent part, after Christianity was introduced; and if that unhappy portion of the people, which consisted of the slaves of all these orders, had no actual representatives, yet the many provisions for their benefit in the laws show that they possessed humane friends in it, attentive to their interests, and compassionating their degradation: these were probably the king and the clergy. It was the interest of royalty, and congenial with the courteous feelings which have usually accompanied our kings, to increase the number of the free; because every freed slave gave the

BOOK crown a new partisan, and thus lessened those of a fierce, haughty, and dangerous nobility. It was the duty and the benevolent wish of the religious, and also their interest, to pursue the same policy, and, in the mean time, to mitigate the evils of thraldom. Thus the feelings, the interests, and the reason of all classes of the Anglo-Saxon society appeared in their witenagemot; and whoever studies the successive provisions of their legislation which have come down to us, will perceive that the state of every class was progressively meliorated by new laws as new circumstances required them; and, even as far as we can discern their operation, almost every law seems to have been an improvement. Nothing more tended to insure this effect, than the right and practice of the subject to petition his legislature; for this in practical tendency makes every man, who has any grievance to complain of, a kind of party to its councils, as it enables him to lay his complaint before it, as completely as if he were a member of its body. Thus as our present parliament, in its sovereign, its nobles, and its popular representatives, and in the petitions which it receives, concenters all the feelings and mind of the nation: so did the Anglo-Saxon witena-gemot; for there is good reason to believe, that the cities and burghs sent their members into its body; and if these were not at first commercial, from the poverty and low estate of the earliest Anglo-Saxon tradesmen, they were likely to be

of this description, when commerce had in CHAP. creased into the power of giving wealth, and that wealth, of creating for the merchant an effective rank not less important in the society whom he benefited, than the born nobility, which the great so highly valued. It is to the credit of the Anglo-Saxons, that no other European branch of the Teutonic population preserved so free and so effective a witena-gemot as they did. The legislatures which continued to exist of this sort in other countries gradually dwindled into non-existence, while the English parliament has flourished like the English nation, an example and an instrument of a national prosperity and power, exceeded by no preceding state, and equalled, if at all, by very few. To Fra Paolo's exclamation, of "Esto perpetua," the tendencies of the present age allow us to add the hope that, sooner or later, "Sit universa."

Where the cyning was only the temporary commander of the nation, for the purposes of war, whose function ceased when peace returned, the witena-gemot must have been the supreme authority of the nation. But when the cyning became an established and permanent dignity, whose privileges and power were perpetually increasing till he attained the majestic prerogatives and widely-diffused property which Athelstan and Edgar enjoyed, the witena-gemot then assumed a secondary rank in the state. We will endeavour to delineate its nature and powers with fidelity, adopting no theory, but

BOOK carefully following the lights which the Saxon documents afford to us.

The topics of our inquiry will be these:

What its members were styled.

Of whom it was composed.

By whom convened.

The times of its meetings.

The place.

Its business.

Its power.

The gemot and its members have various appellations in the writings of our ancestors. In their vernacular tongue they have been styled, the witena-gemot; the Engla ræd gifan (council-givers); the witan; the Eadigra geheahtendlic ymcyme (the illustrious assembly of the wealthy); the Eadigan (the wealthy); the mycel synoth (great synod).³

In the Latin phrases applied to them by our forefathers they have been called optimates; principes; primates; proceses; concionatores Angliæ, and such like.

The kings, who allude to them in their grants, call them, My witan; meorum sapientum archontum; heroicorum virorum; conciliatorum meorum; meorum omnium episcoporum et principum optimatum meorum; optimatibus ⁵ nostris.

Claud. MS. Cleop. 3 Gale, 484, 485., &c.

Sax. Chron. 154. MS. Claud. A. 3. Sax. Chron. 148.
 Alfred's Will. Wilkins, 76. 102. Ibid. p. 10. p. 72., &c.
 Ethelward, 847. Hem. Chart. p. 15. 17. 23. MS.

⁵ Heming, Chart. 2, 41, 57. MS, Claud. C. 9, 103, 112, 113., &c.

All these are various phrases to express the same CHAP. thing. With reference to their presumed wisdom, they were called witan; with reference to their rank and property, or nomination, they were styled eadigan, optimates, principes, proceres, &c. Other names will appear in some of the subsequent quotations.

On the question, who were the members of the witena-gemot, some certain information can be given, and some probable inferences may be made. That the bishops, abbots, eorles, ealdormen, and those who bore the title which was latinised into dux, princeps, &c., were parts of the great national council, is indisputable, from the language of the laws and the numerous charters which they signed. It is as manifest, that others besides these higher nobles also attended it; and that these were thegas or ministri, milites, and several who are mentioned in the charters without any designation of legal rank. Thus far the Anglo-Saxon documents give certain information. The only questionable points are, whether these thegns, milites, and others, attended like our ancient and present barons, as a matter of personal right from their rank, when summoned by the king, and with a legal claim to be so summoned; or whether they were elected representatives of any and what part of the nation, inferior in rank to the summoned nobility. After many years' consideration of the question, I am inclined to believe, that the Anglo-Saxon witena-gemot

BOOK very much resembled our present parliament, in the orders and persons that composed it; and that the members, who attended as representatives, were chosen by classes analogous to those who now possess the elective franchise.

> WE have an expressive outline of the general construction of all the German national councils. in these words of Tacitus: "On the minor affairs the chiefs consult; on the greater, ALL. Yet so, that those things, of which the decision rests with the people, are treated of among the chiefs."6 This passage shows that, by the general principle of the most ancient German gemots, the people made an essential part of the assembly. Both chiefs and people deliberated, and the people decided. This being the primeval principle of the national councils of ancient Germany, before the Angles and Saxons left it, it becomes incumbent on the historical antiquary to show, not when the people acceded to the witena-gemots, but when, if ever, they were divested of the right of attending them. Of such a divestment there is no trace either in our historical or legal records.

> THE popular part of our representation seems to have been immemorial. There is no document that marks its commencement. And if the probabilities of the case had been duly considered, it would have been allowed to be unlikely, that the sovereigns and the aristocracy of

the nation would have united to diminish their CHAP. own legislative power, by calling representatives from the people to share it. Neither kings nor nobles could alone confer this power; and it would have been a voluntary and unparalleled abandonment of their own exclusive prerogatives and privileges, that they should have combined to impart it to others, if these had not possessed an ancient indefeasible right of enjoying it. But, in considering the Anglo-Saxon people that were represented at the gemot, we must not confound them with our present population. Those classes only who now elect members would then have been allowed to elect them; and the numbers of the individuals composing these classes were very much smaller indeed than their present amount. The great bulk of the Anglo-Saxon population was in a servile state, and therefore without any constitutional rights. All the villani, servi, bordarii, coscetæ, cotarii and coliberti, esnes and theows; that is, all the working agricultural population, and most of those who occupied the station of our present small farmers; and in the burghs and cities, all those who were what is called the men, or low vassals of other persons, analogous to our inferior artisans and mechanics and small tradesmen, were the property of their respective lords, and with no more political rights than the cattle and furniture, with which we find them repeatedly classed and transferred. Two-thirds, at least, more probably three-fourths,

BOOK of the Anglo-Saxon population were originally in this state, till voluntary or purchased emancipations, and the effects of war and invasion, gradually increased the numbers of the free. Domesday-book shows, that even in the reign of the Confessor, the largest part of the English population was in the servile state.

> THE constitutional principle as to the servile population of the country seems to have been, that it was represented by its masters in the national council, like the rest of their property.

> HENCE it was only to the freemen of the counties, or, as we now call them, freeholders: and to the free inhabitants of the burghs or boroughs, and cities, whom we now call burgesses and citizens, that any legislative representation can have applied in the Anglo-Saxon times. The freeholders appear to have multiplied from the Northmen invasions; for greater numbers of them are enumerated in Domesdaybook, in the counties which the Danish population principally colonised than in the 7 others. These desolating wars destroyed so many nobles and their families, that many of the servile must have often become liberated from no lords or thegns surviving to claim them; and corresponding with this idea, there are many passages in in our laws which are directed against those who wander over the country without having a visible owner. All such, as well as every fugi-

⁷ See Domesday-book in Essex, Norfolk, &c.

freemen in the burghs or towns where they ultimately settled; yet these would not become electors in those places where none were allowed to be burgesses, who were not formally admitted to be such. They could only acquire a share in the elective franchise in those parts where mere house-holding was sufficient to constitute an elector; and as this large privilege was in after-times possessed in very few places, there is no reason to believe, that it was more extensively enjoyed in the Anglo-Saxon burghs.

If the freeholders of the Anglo-Saxon counties were not represented in their witena-gemot, at what other time did this most important privilege originate? That it should have begun after the Norman conquest is incredible. If the legislative council of the nation had been from immemorial custom confined to the king and nobles, their sturdy maintenance of all their exclusive rights and advantages, is evidence that they would not have willingly curtailed their power by so great an innovation. The pride of nobility would not have admitted unnoble freeholders to have shared in the most honourable of its privileges; and least of all would the fierce and powerful Norman lords have placed the Anglo-Saxon freemen, whom they had conquered, and with whom they were long in jealous enmity and proud hatred, in the possession of such a right. But the total absence of any document or date, of the origin of the elec-

BOOK tion of representatives by the freeholders of vill. counties, is the strongest proof we can have that the custom has been immemorial, and long preceded the Norman conquest. The facts that such representatives have been always called knights of the shire, and that milites, or an order like those afterwards termed knights, were a part of the witena-gemot, befriend this deduction. Milites or knights were not the nobles of the country, though noblemen courted the military honour of the Anglo-Saxon knighthood. So many charters of the witenagemots exist, signed by knights or milites, that either milites had a right as such to be a part of the council, or they were sent there as the representatives of their counties. The first supposition is supported by no law or practice, and is improbable from the number of milites in the country. The latter has been the ancient custom, without any known origin or limitary date.

To the citizens and burgesses of parliament analogous remarks are equally applicable. We may find no existing writ ordering their election earlier than the 23d year of Edward I.8; but the loss of the preceding records is no proof of their non-existence, and ought never to have been confounded with it. All the writs of summons of the Anglo-Saxon nobles to the witenagemot have been lost; yet, who would infer from

Brady gives this writ of summons, Hist. Treat. Boroughs, p. 54.

their non-appearance that the nobles were not CHAP. summoned to the gemot, and had no right to be there. The earliest summons of the peers to parliament is usually, but erroneously, said to be that of the 49 Hen. III.; but is this a proof that they were not in parliament before? There is nothing in the earliest writ which has survived that marks such writ to have been the commencement of the custom. The truth seems to be, that this privilege has been, like the county representation, immemorial. Authentic history can assign to it no limit.

It is in this way that the privilege is mentioned by our most venerable writers. When our ancient Littleton mentions burghs, he describes them as the most ancient towns of England, and as possessed of this privilege of representation, without any remark that this great right was a novelty, or at that time of modern origin. His words are: "The ancient towns called burghs are the most ancient cities that are in England; for those towns that are called cities were burghs in ancient times, and were called burghs. For of such ancient cities, called

⁹ The error on this subject shows the absurdity of dating the origin of any part of the parliamentary representation from the first writ that has happened to survive. Dugdale, and from him Hume, and a stream of writers on this subject, state the summons of the peers of the 49 Henry III. as the most ancient that exists; and yet Selden had noticed one twenty-three years earlier. There is one to the archbishop of York, 26 Henry III. It is Dors. Claus. 26 Henry HI. Mem. 13.

BOOK burghs, come the burgesses to parliament, when the king has summoned his parhament." It appears to me that our venerable judge, when he wrote this passage, considered the custom of sending burgesses as ancient as the burghs themselves. 10

> THE ancient words of the writ to the sheriffs. cited by Lord Coke, correspond with the preceding view of the subject. They do not order him to return burgesses from this or that particular burgh, to which the king or parliament had at some late period granted a right; but they direct him to send from every burgh in his county two burgesses "; every burgh, as if it had been the common public right of all burghs, and not a special privilege granted to any in particular. The language of the oldest writ yet found, 23 Ed. I., is precisely the same. 12

In the same manner our ancient lawyer Bracton speaks generally of the English laws, as having been made by the three estates of king, lords, and commons. It must be observed that he is not here speaking of new laws, but of the ancient law of the kingdom. "It will not be absurd to call the English laws by the name of laws, although not written, since whatever shall have been justly defined and approved by the

Littleton, Ten. lib. ii. s. 164.

Coke on Littl. p. 109.

[&]quot;De qualibet civitate ejusdem comitatus, duos cives et de quolibet burgo, duos burgenses." Brady, p. 54.

council and consent of the magnates, and the CHAP. common assent of the republic, the authority of the king or prince preceding, has the vigour of law."¹³ Here our unwritten common law is derived from the concurring authority of the king, the great, and the common assent of the republic. This third branch of authority is evidently that which arose from the popular representation.

Ina, in his introduction to his laws, mentions distinctly the three orders of the nation as assisting and concurring in their formation.—"My bishops and all my ealdormen, and the eldest witan of my people, and a great collection of God's servants." ¹⁴ Here the nobles, the people, and the clergy are distinctly recognised.

That in addition to the clergy and greater nobles there were other members of the witenagemot; that thegns or ministri 15, and milites, or a rank in the community called afterwards knights, were among these other members; and that there were other persons there, who were neither clergy, nobles, knights, thegns, nor ministri, and who being mentioned without designation, in an age when all were so tenacious of their rank, may be reasonably considered to

¹³ Bracton, c. i. p. 1.

¹⁴ Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 14.

In Henry the First's time, thegn is mentioned as if analogous to baron. For a legal offence the fine of a comes was ten mancæ: thanii vel barones quinque. Wilk. Leg. 250.

BOOK have been of an inferior order, are facts proved by the expressions used in many Anglo-Saxon charters, and by the signatures to them.

> A charter of Ethelbald, in 736, is signed by the king, two bishops, two comites, a dux, an abbas, and by six persons without any note of their quality.16

> A charter of Ethelred, expressed to be made "with the consent and licence of my optimates and other fideles," is signed by the king, two archbishops, six bishops, four duces, six abbots, ten ministri, and by two without any title. 17

> A charter of Ethelwulph is signed by the king, archbishop, two duces, and by twenty-three without a title. It is indorsed by two abbots, seven presbyters, six deacons, and by three without a title. 18

> A charter of Sigered, expressed to be made "with the advice and consent of my principes," is signed by the king, archbishop, two abbots, one presbyter, one comes, and by four without a title. 19

> A charter of Ceolwulf is signed by the king, archbishop, two bishops, a subregulus, ten duces, three abbots, two presbyters, and by five without a title. 20

> A charter of Offa is signed by the king, queen, one archbishop, three bishops, five abbots, two principes, one dux, one prefect, and by eight without a title. 31 Another of Offa's has two without a title.22

> A charter of Cenwulf, made "with the advice and consent of my optimates," is signed by king, queen, archbishop, four bishops, five duces, and by one without a title.33

> A charter of Berhtwulf, mentioned to be made before the king and proceres, and that the optimates adjudged, and that the king before his archontes did it, is signed by the king,

¹⁶ MSS. Cott. Aug. A. 2.

²⁹ Dugdale, Mon. Ang. p. 29.

²⁰ MSS. Aug. A. 2.

²³ Heming. Chart. p. 18.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

³³ Ibid. p. 23.

queen, four bishops, one abbot, eight duces, and by six with- CHAP. out a title. 24

A charter of Edward, the son of Alfred, made "with the testimony of the bishops, and princes, and some senators subject to them," is signed by the king, the ruler of Mercia and his lady, three bishops, two duces, two ministri, and by one without a title. 35

A charter of Burghred, made "with the advice and licence of all my proceres," is signed by the king, queen, four bishops, ten duces, and by ten without a title. 26

A charter of Edward, in 908, is signed by the king, archbishop, four bishops, king's brother and two sons, five duces. four presbyters, eighteen ministri, and by three without a title 27

A charter of Edward the Confessor to the Abbey of Westminster, is signed by the king, queen, two archbishops, eight bishops, seven abbots, the chancellor, four duces, six ministri, and by four without a title. 18

A charter of Edgar is signed by the king, two archbishops, three bishops, three abbots, four duces, four ministri, and by fifteen others without a title. 19

A charter of Cnut is signed by the king, queen, two archbishops, six bishops, seven duces, seven milites, seven abbots, and by five without a title 30; and this is expressed to be made with the advice and decree of the archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls, and of my other fidelium.31

A charter of Edgar, in 973, besides the king, two archbishops, three bishops, three abbots, four duces, and four disc-thegns, has twenty-one without a title among the according persons. 31

In a charter of Edward the Confessor, the consenting

²⁴ Heming. Chart. p. 28. Another of Berhtwulf is signed by seven without a title, p. 224.

²⁵ Ibid. p. 65.

²⁶ Ibid. p. 87.

²⁷ Dugd. Mon. p. 37.

²⁸ Ibid. p. 62.

³⁹ Ibid. p. 66.

³⁰ MSS. Aug. A. 2.

³¹ Dugd. Mon. p. 288.

³² Ibid. p. 244. "His testibus concordantibus."

BOOK VIII.

persons are the king, two archbishops, three bishops, the chancellor, a notary, five abbots, four duces, a chamberlain, a stallere, and two without a title.³³

From these instances it is manifest that there were members of the witena-gemot who were distinguished by no rank or title of honour, like the duces, earls, thegns, or ministri, and milites, and who had no other dignity than that of being part of the gemot, and therefore signed the charters without any designation of peculiar quality. These untitled persons suit the situation of those who were sent by the cities and burghs. Such would be but plain citizens and burgesses, who had no rank in the state by which they could be designated.

THAT thegns, or ministri, and milites were always members of the witena-gemot, will be sufficiently manifested by the following instances, as well as by some of those already adduced. It will be hereafter shown, in considering the dignity of thegns, or thanes, that the superior thegns, also called king's thegns, had under them inferior thegns, who were named medeme, or middling thegns. As Domesday-

³³ Dugd. Mon. p. 238. In a charter granted by Wihtred. it is stated that it was confirmed in 716, in the synod held at Cloveshoe, by the authority of those whose names follow. It is signed by the archbishop, thirteen bishops, ten presbyters, one deacon, two abbots, two prepositi, one earl, and twenty others who have no titles. Astle's Charters, MSS. No. 2. In 1018 is a charter of Caut signed by prelates and duces, and also by a prepositus, two ministri, and by four others with no quality annexed. Ast. Ch. MSS. No. 31.

book mentions thanes holding land, with their CHAP. milites under them, who were also landed-proprietors, we may presume that the Saxon term of the middling thanes, was first used to mark those who are in Domesday called their milites, especially as Alfred translated the milites of Bede by the word thegn. But the term cniht was also coming into use before the Conquest for the same class; and afterwards the word knights was their established English denomination, as milites was the Latin one. That the Saxons had a dignity and class of persons analogous to the Norman knight has been already proved: one authority will be hereafter noticed which applies the word drenc to this celebrated class of our population.

IT has been already intimated that Saxon superior thegas were classed as the Norman barons, and it is probable that the secondary or middling thegns were similar to the Norman knights. But although milites were in the Anglo-Saxon witena-gemot, as well as thegns, yet, as all the milites, or secondary thegas, were too numerous to be there, the inference seems indisputable that those who were present did not come from any personal right of being members, but were sent as the elected representatives of others, either of their own class or of all the freeholders in the county whom they preceded in rank.

THE following examples will add more information on these subjects: -

BOOK VIII. A charter of Ceolulf, in 803, is signed by the king, archbishop, two bishops, three duces, one presbyter, and by thirteen milites, 34

One of Ethelstan has the names of the king, archbishop, eight bishops, four duces, and twenty marked mis and mi, which may either mean miles or minister.³⁵

One of Cnut stated to be "with these witnesses consenting," and "under the testimony of the optimates," is signed by the king, queen, two archbishops, nine bishops, four duces, eight abbots, and four milites, 36

One of Ethelstan has the king, archbishop, five bishops, three duces, and seven ministri. 37

Eadwig's charters exhibit to us, in one, the king, his brother, archbishop, two bishops, five duces, and eight ministri; in the other, besides the clergy, six duces and six persons marked m. 38

Besides one of Edgar's, signed by sixteen m, and another by twenty-six mis 29, there is another, expressed to be "confirmed at London by the common council of his optimates," which is signed by four ministri. 40

In 958, a charter of Edgar's, made "with the advice of my optimates," adds, "these witnesses consenting, whose names follow according to the dignity of each." The names are, the king's, two archbishops, six bishops, the king's avia, a former queen, three abbots, seven duces, and sixty ministri. 41

A charter of Wulfere, in 664, made "with the accompanying kings, fathers, and duces, is signed by the king, by three other kings of the octarchy, his brother, and two sisters, archbishop, four bishops, two presbyters, one abbot, three principes, and five ministri;" and it is added, "by the rest of the optimates and ministri of the king." 42

Edmund's charter, in 942, is signed by eleven 43 milites;

³⁴ MSS. Aug. A. 2. 35 Ibid. 36 Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid. ³⁸ Ibid. ³⁹ Ibid.

^{4°} Dug. Mon. 17. One of the persons, among the kings that sign, is Mascusius Archipirata. This was a sea-king. Another has twelve ministri, p. 141.

⁴¹ Dug. Mon. p. 103. ⁴³ Ibid. p. 66. ⁴³ Ibid. 287.

another in 941, by fourteen ministri. 44 So one of Edred's CHAP. has nine ministri 45; another, marked as " with the consent heroicorum virorum," has also nine ministri. 46 One of Ethelstan's is signed by eleven ministri. 47 One of Cnut " with the advice of twenty ministri, among others." 48

Of Ethelred's charters, one contains fifteen ministri among the concurring persons 49; another is made with the advice of forty-three ministri, among others 50; another, in 1006, among the "sapientes," or wise men, places twenty-one ministri 51; and also ten ministri in 1001. 52

On so important a subject it may be proper to adduce a few more examples:

A charter of Edgar, in 970, gives strong evidence on this subject: it is signed by the king, two archbishops, eleven bishops, the queen, eleven abbots, nine duces, and twentysix milites, or knights; and there are added these words, "With many others of all the dignities and primates of my kingdom." 53

It is obvious from this document that the witena-gemot consisted not only of the prelates, abbots, and nobles, but of knights and many others, who are called dignitates et primates. 54

Another charter of Edgar is signed by the king, one archbishop, twelve bishops, twelve abbots, six duces, and twenty-eight milites, or knights.55

⁴⁴ Dug. Mon. 214. So another in 940. has twenty-three ministri. Aug. A. 2.

⁴⁵ Aug. A. 2.

⁴⁶ Dugd. Mon. 215.

⁴⁷ Hem. Chart. p. 12.

⁴⁸ Dugd. 276. Another of his is signed by twenty-six ministri, ibid. p. 229.

⁴⁹ Dugd. 258. 50 Ibid. 261. 51 Ibid. 270. 52 Ibid. 217. So fifteen ministri sign another, p. 218.

⁵³ Compare the charters in Dugdale, p. 211., with those in p. 141. and 103.

⁵⁴ Gale's Script. vol. iii. p. 517. 55 Ibid. p. 520.

BOOK VIII. One of Cnut is signed by the king, queen, two archbishops, eleven bishops, eight abbots, three earls, five milites, and five others called satraps.

That this was part of the witena-gemot is manifest, because one of the Comites expresses, in addition to his signature, that it was the decretum sapientum, the decree of the wise men. ⁵⁷

The Saxon Chronicle obviously alludes to the members and assembly of the witena-gemot when he mentions that William the Conqueror wore his crown every year, in Easter, at Winchester; on Whitsuntide, at Westminster; and in midwinter at Gloucester; and then were with him all the rice men over all England; archbishops, bishops, abbots, and earls, thegns, and 58 cnihtas. It is not at all probable that thegns and knights would have been part of the Conqueror's parliament if they had not been constituent parts of the national council before his invasion.

That the thegn, or minister, was also sometimes a miles I infer from observing that one of Edgar's charters is signed by eight with the designation of miles, some of whose names I recognise in other charters of the same king, where they are denoted as ministri. ⁵⁹ That thegn is sometimes translated minister many charters and Saxon documents show ⁶⁰; but there

⁵⁷ Gale's Script. vol. iii. p. 523. 58 Sax. Chron. p. 190. 59 Compare the charters in Dugdale Mon. p. 211. with those in p. 141. and 103.

⁶⁰ And so Alfred translates the Latin of Bede.

distinguishes the ministri from the nobiles: it is signed by the king, the archbishop, four bishops, six duces, one abbot, three nobiles and nine ministri. 61

That the witena-gemot contained some who had lands, and some who had none, and therefore did not sit in that assembly by virtue of their baronies, or landed property, may be justly inferred from an important charter of Kenulf, king of Mercia, in the year 811.—

It states that the king called to the consecration of the church, "the whole of the optimates of Mercia; the bishops, princes, earls, procuratores, and my relations, the kings of Kent and Essex, with all who were present, witnesses, in our synodical councils." The king adds, "With all the optimates of Mercia in three synods, with unanimous advice, I gladly gave my gifts to all the archontes of Mercia, and of the other provinces, in gold, in silver, and in all my utensils, and in chosen steeds; that is, to each according to the dignity of his degree; and on all who had not lands I bestowed a pound in the purest silver, and in the purest gold; and to every presbyter one marc; and to every servant of God one shilling; and these gifts are not to be numbered, as it became our royal dignity." 62

⁶x Dugd. Mon. 230.

⁶² Ibid. 189. It is signed by only the king, the two other kings, archbishop, twelve bishops, and eleven duces, which shows that only a part of the witena-gemot signed this charter. Some of the Saxon charters have been supposed to be forged just after the Conquest. The observation has been made much too indiscriminately. But though the monks may have sometimes pretended to more grants of land, and of exemptions than they were entitled to, their own interest would lead them to be correct in their forms and phrases of the documents they adduced. In the above

VIII.

ROOK This important charter not only proves that some of the members of the witena-gemot had no lands, but it seems to intimate that they met in three chambers. The expression "in three synods," coupled with "the unanimous advice,". leads the mind to ask whether it does not refer to the three orders of clergy, nobles, and commons meeting in separate synods, rather than to three successive meetings of the same synod. The practice from the time that the meetings of parliament become distinctly visible to us has been such separate meetings, with the custom of all uniting together when the king was present. The natural force of the words "three synods" is to express three distinct councils, not three sittings of the same council.

> THERE is a charter, dated 970, in Ingulf which, besides the clergy, duces, and ministers, has fourteen signatures without any designation. 63

> In one a person signs himself as both sacerdos and minister, as if the minister was a qualification distinct from, and additional to, that of priest.

> In 833, the king says he makes his charter before the bishops, and greater process of all England, as if the process had been in two divisions—the majores and the minores. 64

citations I have endeavoured to avoid all that seemed doubtful, but we cannot believe that the monks would expose themselves to immediate detection by introducing into the witena-gemot those classes who were never there. Therefore even surreptitious charters would throw light on this subject. - Procuratores, or attorneys, imply representation. 64 Ibid. p. 10. · W Ingulf, Hist. p. 117.

THE same distinction is expressly mentioned CHAP. in 851. The optimates of the universi concilii, of the whole council, are noticed; and Ingulf says, "In this council, many, tam majores quam minores, became afflicted with an epidemical disease," 65

This distinction of the greater from the less barons, or proceses, in the Anglo-Saxon times, shows that there were two classes of them in the national council before the Conquest. That the majores, or greater barons, answered to our present House of Peers, and were, like them, called individually to parliament by the king's writ of summons, and that the others were to be sent like our Commons, we may safely infer from the provisions of Magna Charta: "We will cause to be summoned the archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls, and greater barons, majores barones, separately, by our letters: and besides, we will cause to be summoned, in general, by our sheriffs and bailiffs, all those who hold of us in capite at a certain day, at the end of forty days at least, at a certain place," &c.66 The provisions of Magna Charta were not claimed as innovations, but as the ancient rights and privileges of the nation.

THE same distinction of the inferior barons from the superior chamber of them, is ex-

⁶⁵ Ingulf, Hist. p. 16. In the same sense Eadmer mentions "totam regni nobilitatem, populumque minorem," p. 58.

⁶⁶ Statutes of the Realm, p. 10.

BOOK pressively mentioned in the life of Becket, by his contemporary secretary.

After stating that the king appointed a general council, or parliament, to meet at Northampton, he says, "On the second day the bishops, earls, and all the barons were sitting." ⁶⁷ In the discussion the bishops said, "We sit here not as bishops, but as barons: you are barons and we are barons, your ⁶⁸ peers." He afterwards adds, "The king exacted from the earls and barons their judgment of the archbishop." Then follows this important passage: "Some sheriffs and barons of the second dignity are called in, antient in days, that they may be added to them, and be present at the judgment." ⁶⁹

These last quotations prove that there were barons of the second dignity distinct from the greater, not only in John but in Henry the Second's times; and by comparing them with the expressions of Ingulf, it is obvious that the same distinction prevailed in the Saxon times. The passage from Stephanides also implies that, until called in, the minor barons were not sitting with the peers.

THE expressions of the writers immediately after the Conquest, in describing the national council, show that it consisted of other classes besides the nobles and clergy, because it is not likely that the three first Norman sovereigns

would have introduced, as there is no evidence that they did introduce, a more popular representation. Thus of Henry the First it is said, by Peter of Blois, "Having appointed a most distinguished council at London, as well of the bishops and abbots of all the clergy of England, as of the earls, barons, optimates, and proceeds of all his kingdom." The optimates and proceeds and barons, and additional to them.

So the Saxon Chronicle mentions of the same king, Henry the First, that he "sent his writs over all England, and commanded his bishops and his abbots, and all his thegns, that they should come to his ge-witena-mot at Candlemasday at Gloucester: and they did so: and the king bade them choose an archbishop. The bishops chose one, but it is added, that the monks, the eorles, and the thegnas, opposed him." 71 So it is mentioned four years afterwards, that Henry held all his "hired," meaning his council, at Windsor, at Christmas; and that all the head men, lay and clergy, that were in England, were there; and it adds, that the archbishop, bishops, and abbots, and the earls, and all the thegas that were there, swore fidelity to his daughter. 72 These passages concur with

⁷º Pet. Bless. Hist. p. 128.

⁷² Sax. Chron. 224, 225. That thanes or thegas made part of the witena-gemot is expressly declared by Edgar; for he says, "I and my thegas will," &c. Wilk. p. 80.

⁷² Sax. Chron. p. 230.

BOOK the preceding to show that the witena-gemot here contained other members, called thegns, in addition to the earls and clergy.

> RECOLLECTING preceding facts, and the immemorial custom of the united assent of King, Lords, and Commons being given to all our statute-laws, without any record of the commencement of their concurrence, the following passages of the unanimous consent of the whole council in the Anglo-Saxon times, and of their being the council of the whole nation, seem very much to imply an unanimity of more bodies. or classes than one single assembly of assenting nobles: -

> "With the unanimous consent of the whole of the present council." 73

> "With the common gratuitous council and consent of all the magnates of the kingdom." 74

> "When (948.) the universal magnates of the kingdom, summoned by the royal edict, as well the archbishop, bishops, and abbots, as the other proceses and optimates of the whole kingdom, had met together at London, to treat of the public affairs of the whole kingdom." 75

> " 947. Who at London in a common council before the archbishop, bishops, and the magnates of the whole 76 land."

So Egbert says: —

"With the licence and consent of the whole of our nation, and with the unanimity of all the optimates." 77

So a charter of Ethelred mentions, emphatically, "with the unanimous legal council, and most equal judgment, of the bishops, duces, and

⁷³ Ingulf, p. 15. 74 Ibid. p. 13. 75 Ibid. p. 32.

⁷⁶ Ibid. p. 39. 77 MSS. Claud. C. 9.

all the optimates of this kingdom." And a CHAP. charter of Burhred, in 864, is made "with the consent and license of all our senate of bishops, princes, and of all our optimates together." Another document says, "with the testimony of the bishops and princes, and of some senators subject to them." 78 All these expressions seem not to suit an assembly that consisted merely of nobles and clergy.

HENCE, when we read that William the Conqueror adds, "By the common council of all our kingdom 79," and that his son Henry the First uses the words "By the common council of the barons 8°," we appear not to err when we infer that the words common council express an united council of more classes and bodies than one. It is thus the terms have been immemorially used in the city of London. Its lord mayor, aldermen, and the elected deputies of its wards, form, when all assemble, its common council; yet the aldermen have a separate court, with separate powers and privileges, and at times, like the mayor, act distinctly and apart. There is every reason to suppose that this civic constitution of the metropolis originated in the Anglo-Saxon times.

But this meaning of the terms "common

⁷⁸ MSS, Claud, and Hem. Chart. 63, 65.

⁷⁹ Wilk. Concil. p. 228.

²⁰ Ibid. 233. So John says in the articles preceding Magna Charta, that no scutage or aid shall be imposed on the kingdom except by the "commune consilium."

BOOK council" is not left merely to our conjecture, it is the actual meaning given to the words by the most ancient writ of electing citizens and burgesses to parliament that has survived to us. It occurs among the Rolls of the 23d Edward the First.-

> "We command and firmly enjoin you, that of the aforesaid county you cause to be elected, without delay, two knights, and from every city of the same county two citizens, and from every burgh two burgesses, of the more discreet and able to labour, and cause them to come to us at the aforesaid day and place; so that the said knights may have then there full and sufficient power for themselves, and for the community of the aforesaid county; and the said citizens and burgesses for themselves, and for the community of the aforesaid cities and burghs, distinct from them, to do there what shall be ordained from the common council (de communi consilio) in the premises." 82

> HERE the words common council are applied to express the deliberate determinations of the whole body of the parliament in its three estates of king, lords, and commons.

> IF only the nobles and clergy, as nobles or barons, had formed the witena-gemot there seems to be no reason why so many and such various phrases should have been used in the Anglo-Saxon documents to express its members. If they had been of one class only, one uniform and simple denomination would have been more natural; but if the witena-gemot was a complex body, and, besides the nobles, comprised knights of the shires, citizens, and burgesses, as all our parliaments since the Conquest seem to have

gr Claus. 23 Ed. I. M. 4. apud Brady, p. 54.

done, then we perceive the cause of their appel- CHAP. lations being multiplied.

THE force of all the preceding circumstances. considered without reference to any theory, and taken together, seems to me to suit better the constitution of our present parliament than any senate composed merely of nobility and clergy. Although we have no direct evidence from records that the cities and burghs were represented in the witena-gemot, yet there seems to be sufficient probabilities of evidence that the fact was so. The claim of the borough of Barnstaple, in Devonshire, must have considerable weight on our judgments when we reflect on this subject. In a petition to parliament. presented in the reign of Edward the Third, this borough claimed to have been chartered, by Athelstan, with several privileges, and to have sent, from time immemorial, burgesses to parliament. Its claims were investigated by jurors legally appointed, and though from the loss of the charter the other immunities were not confirmed, its right of sending burgesses was admitted to continue. 82 In Edward the Second's reign the borough of St. Alban's stated, in a petition to parliament, that they, as the other burgesses of the kingdom, ought to come, by two common burgesses, to the parliament of the kingdom when that should happen to be

⁸² Lord Lyttleton remarked this important document in his History of Henry II. vol. iii. p. 413.

BOOK summoned, as they have been accustomed to come in all past times; but that the sheriff, to favour the abbot, had refused to return them. The answer to this petition was not a denial of the right, but a reference to the Chancery, to see if they had been accustomed to 83 come. The right here claimed is not rested on any particular charter, but on the ancient usage of the country.

> In the 51st Edward the Third, the Commons stated that, " of the common right of the kingdom, two persons are and will be chosen to be in parliament for the community of the said counties, except the prelates, dukes, earls, and barons, and such as hold by barony; and besides cities and burghs, who ought to choose of themselves such as should answer for 84them." Here also the privilege of parliamentary representation is not rested on any dated law or royal charter, but on the common right of the kingdom.

> THERE is a passage in the laws of Ethelstan that seems to me to relate to the witena-gemot, and to the representatives of burghs. If it has this reference, it shows the punishment that was provided for those who, when chosen for the burghs, neglected to attend the gemot. -

> " IF any one shall forsake the gemot three times he shall pay a fine to the king for his contumacy, and shall be summoned seven nights

⁸³ Plac. Parliam. vol. . p. 327. 84 Ibid. p. 368.

before the gemot meets. If he will not then CHAP. act rightly, (that is, attend,) nor pay for this contumacy, then all the yldestan men that belong to that burgh shall ride and take away all that he possesses, and set him to bail." 85

The expence, trouble, suspension of business, and occasional danger, which the burgesses, especially the more distant would often experience from the perils of travelling, and the violence of the great, in attending the witenagemot must have made many persons backward in frequenting it, especially when they had been chosen without desiring the distinction. This law seems directed to counteract this disposition.

THAT it was no common gemot appears from the next provision of the same law, which supposes a reluctance in the yldestan man to inflict the punishment enjoined, and therefore imposes a fine on every one that would not ride with his companions to execute the law. It proceeds to forbid all revenge for the punishment, and directs the same loss of property on the avenger as had been attached to the person that would not attend the gemot. I cannot think that the severity of this law was wanted for enforcing attendance on a mere folc or shire gemot, for which there were so many inducements from its vicinity and popularity. Hence I think it relates to the great national council, to which only the word gemot, by itself, properly applies.

Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 60.

BOOK The word gemot is frequently thus used to express the witena-gemot.86

THAT every freeman had his definite rights, and every land its definite burthens and services, known and established by law and custom, is apparent from numerous Anglo-Saxon documents which have survived to us, and is fully shown by Domesday-book, in which the commissioners appointed by the Conqueror made a specific return of the gelding lands and burghs of the country, and stated the individual payments and share of military burthens to which each was subject, and which only could be claimed from him according to law and ancient custom. The act of the national legislature to which, by his representatives, he assented, could alone subject him to further burthens. These definite, individual rights favour the supposition that the witena-gemot, in order to affect the property and exemptions of the free class of the people, must have consisted of more orders than that of the nobility and clergy, and the probabilities, on the whole, seem to be that the witena-gemot very much resembled our present parliaments.

Dr. Brady's assertions, in his treatise on boroughs, that "there were no citizens, burgesses, or tenants of the king's demesnes summoned to great councils or parliaments until the 23d of Edward the First" ⁸⁷ is not supported by the

⁸⁶ Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 62. 69. 116. 146. &c.

⁸⁷ Brady on Bor. p. 68.

authorities which he adduces, but rests on his CHAP. mistaken supposition that the first writ, now existing, of that year in which the sheriff was directed to proceed to the election of citizens and burgesses 88 was the first time that they were elected at all, although there is nothing in that writ which marks it to have been the commencement of an innovation so momentous, and although one of the next documents which he produces shows that the government attempted to get money from the burghs without calling their representatives into parliament. 89 The true inference from all his documents is, that the writs for the election of burgesses now existing are but the copies of more ancient forms, and the repetition of a prescriptive custom which has no known commencement.

That they were not regularly summoned will appear probable when the frequent violences of power, and all the irregularities of those disturbed times are duly considered.

That kings may have sometimes been content with the money they obtained from the barons and the counties, or may have sometimes procured it, by persuasion or threats, from the

⁸⁸ He gives it in his book, p. 54.

⁸⁹ Ibid. p. 66. One writ mentions that the mayor, sheriffs, aldermen, and all the communities of the city had granted him a sixth of their moveables, and the other, reciting this as an example, directs the commissioners to ask (ad petendum) this of the demesne cities in the four counties mentioned, and to go with the sheriffs to them to require and efficaciously *induce* them to make a similar grant. p. 67.

BOOK burgs separately, as Edward the First attempted in the instance alluded to, are also credible facts; but the fact that he was obliged to solicit the grant from the burgs, is evidence that he had not the legal power of raising it without their consent; and their right to give this consent is evidence of the existence of their constitutional privilege of not being taxed without their own consent; and this truth confirms all the reasoning which makes it probable that their representatives were called to the Saxon witenagemot when it was intended that the burgs should contribute to the taxation. It does not all shake this general principle that some new burgs attained the privilege within the period of historical record. 90

> WE know what was necessary to exalt a ceorl to a thegn, but we cannot distinctly ascertain all the qualifications which entitled persons to a seat in the witena-gemot. There is, however, one curious passage which ascertains that a certain amount of property was an indispensable

⁹⁰ The ancient charters of London, or copies of them recited in authentic charters, exist from the time of Henry the First, but none contain the grant of its right of sending representatives. The just inference seems to be that this constitutional right had been established long before. There is no charter existing, and none have been known to exist, that confers the right on any of the ancient burghs. This appears to me to show that it was the ancient immemorial right of all burghs or cities, beginning with their existence, and constitutionally attached to it, and not flowing from any specific grant.

requisite, and that acquired property would CHAP. answer this purpose as well as hereditary property. The possession here stated to be necessary was forty hides of land. The whole incident is so curious as to be worth transcribing. -Guddmund desired in matrimony the daughter of a great man, but because he had not the lordship of forty hides of land, he could not, though noble, be reckoned among the proceses; and therefore she refused him. He went to his brother, the abbot of Ely, complaining of his misfortune. The abbot fraudulently gave him possessions of the monastery sufficient to make up the deficiency. This circumstance attests that nobility alone was not sufficient for a seat among the witan, and that forty hides of land was an indispensable qualification. 91

I cannot avoid mentioning one person's designation, which seems to have the force of expressing an *elected* member. Among the persons signing to the act of the gemot at Cloveshoe, in 824, is "Ego Beonna *electus* consent. et subscrib." 92

^{91 3} Gale's Script. p. 513.

⁹³ Astle's MS. Charters, No. 12.

CHAP. V.

Witena-Gemot. — How convened. — Times and Places of meeting. — Its Business and Power.

THEY were convened by the king's writ. Several passages in the writers of this period mention that they assembled at the summons of the king. "On a paschal solemnity all the greater men, the clergy and the laity of all the land, met at the king's court, to celebrate the festival called by him." In 1048, the Saxon Chronicle says, "the king sent after all his witan, and bade them come to Gloucester a little after the feast of Saint Mary." In one MS. in the year 993, the king says, "I ordered a synodale council to be held at Winton on the day of Pentecost."

The times of their meeting seem to have been usually the great festivals of the church, as Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide; and of these, if we may judge, by its being more frequently mentioned, Easter was the favorite period. But their meetings were not confined to these seasons; for we find that they some-

^{3 3} Gale's Script. 395.

² Sax. Chron. p. 163.

³ MS. Claud. C. 9. p. 122.

times took place in the middle of Lent 4, near CHAP. the feast of Saint Mary 5, July 6, September, and October. One ancient law-book, the Mirror, mentions "that Alfred caused the earls to meet for the state of the kingdom, and ordained for a perpetual usage, that twice in the year, or oftener if need were, during peace, they should assemble together at London to speak their minds for the guiding of the people; how to keep from offences; live in quiet, and have right done them by ascertained usages and sound judgment." We may add, that annual and more frequent meetings are often mentioned, but never annual elections.

The place of their assembly was not fixed. After Egbert's accession, the gemot was convened at London, at Kingston, at Wilton, Winton, Cloveshoe, Dorchester, Cyrneceaster, Calne, Ambresbury, Oxford, Gloucester, Ethelwaraburh, Kyrtlenegum, and other places. Perhaps the place of their meeting depended on the king's residence at the time, and was fixed by his convenience.

Our monarchs seem to have maintained their influence in the witena-gemots by their munificence. One account of their meeting in the

⁴ Sax. Chron. 161.

⁵ Ibid. 168.

⁴ Astle's MS. Chart. No. 2.

⁷ Sax. Chron. 164. Heming. Chart. 50.

⁸ Mirror, c. i. s. 2.

Sax. Chron. 142. 161. 168. 124. 128. 163. 146.
 Heming. 93. MS. Cott. Aug. 2. 20. Astle's MS. Chart.
 No. 8. No. 12. MS. Cleop. B. 13. MS. Claud. C. 9. 121.

BOOK time of Edgar is thus given: "All England rejoicing in the placid leisure of tranquil peace, it happened that on a certain paschal solemnity all the majores of all the country, as well clergy as laymen, of both orders and professions, met at the royal court called by him to celebrate the festivity, and to be honoured by him with royal gifts. Having celebrated the divine mysteries with all alacrity and joy, all went to the palace to refresh their bodies. Some days having been passed away, the king's hall resounded with acclamations. The streets murmured with the busy hum of men. None felt entirely a refusal of the royal munificence; for all were magnificently rewarded with presents of various sort and value, in vessels, vestments, or the best 10 horses,33

> THE king presided at the witena-gemots, and sometimes, perhaps always, addressed them. In .993 we have this account of a royal speech. The king says, in a charter which recites what had passed at one of their meetings, "I benignantly addressed to them salutary and pacific words. I admonished all—that those things which were worthy of the Creator, and serviceable to the health of my soul, or to my royal dignity, and which ought to prevail as proper for the English people, they might with the Lord's assistance, discuss in "common." The speech of Edgar, in favour of the monks, is stated at length in one of our old 12 Chroniclers.

³ Gale's Script. p. 395. " MS, Claud, C. 9, p, 122.

^{. 23} Eth. Abb. Ailr.

It has been already mentioned, that one of their CHAP. duties was to elect the sovereign, and to assist at his coronation. Another was to co-operate with the king in making laws. Thus Bede says, of the earliest laws we have, that Ethelbert established them "with the counsel of his wise men." ¹³ The introductory passages of the Anglo-Saxon laws which exist, usually express that they were made with the concurrence of the witan.

THE witena-gemot appears also to have made treaties jointly with the king; for the treaty with Guthrun and the Danes thus begins: "This is the treaty which Ælfred, king, and Gythrun, king, and all the witan of England, and all the people in East Anglia, (that is, the Danes,) have made and fastened with '4 oaths." In 1011, it is said, that the king and his witan sent to the Danes and desired peace, and promised tribute and supply. 15 On another occasion, the Saxon Chronicle states, that the king sent to the hostile fleet an ealdorman, who, with the word of the king and his witan, made peace with them. 16 In 1016, it expresses that Eadric, the ealdorman, and the witan who were there, counselled, that the kings (Edmund and Canute) should make peace between 17 them. In 1002, the king ordered, and his witan, the money to be paid to the Danes, and peace to

Bede, lib. ii. c. 5.

²⁵ Sax. Chron. 140. 26

²⁴ Wilkins' Leg. Angl. 47.

¹⁶ Ibid. 132. 17 Ibid. 150.

BOOK be made. 18 The treaty, printed in Wilkins' Leges Anglo-Saxonicæ, p. 104. is said to have been made by the king and his witan.

They are also mentioned to us as assisting the king in directing the military preparations of the kingdom. Thus, in 992, the Saxon Chronicle says, that "the king ordered, and all his witan, that man should gather together all the ships that were to go to London." In 999, the king, with his witan, ordered that both the ship fyrde and the land fyrde should be led against the Danes. 20 So, in 1052, the king decreed, and his witan, that man should proceed with the ships to Sandwich; and they set Raulf, eorl, and Oddan, eorl, to heafod-mannum (to be the head-men) thereto. 21

IMPEACHMENTS of great men were made before the witena-gemot. Some instances may be concisely narrated. In 1048, the king, conceiving that he had cause of complaint against the family of the famous Godwin, convened the witena-gemot. The family armed. The witan ordered that both sides should desist from hostilities, and that the king should give God's peace and his full friendship to both sides. Then the king and his witan directed another witena-gemot to be assembled at London on the next harvest equinox, and the king ordered the army on the south and north of the Thames to be bannan.

¹⁸ Sax. Chron. 132. 19 Ibid. 126. 20 Ibid. 130.

³ Ibid. 165.

At this gemot, eorl Swain, one of Godwin's CHAP. sons, was declared an utlah (outlaw); and Godwin and his other son, Harold, were cited to attend the gemot as speedily as possible. They approached, and desired peace and hostages, that they might come into the gemot and quit it without treachery. They were again cited, and they repeated their demand. Hostages were refused them, and five days of safety only were allowed them to leave the country. They obeyed, and went exiles into Flanders. 22

We have another instance of the great council both banishing and pardoning. A great gemot, in 1052, was assembled at London, which "all the eorls and the best men in the country" attended. There Godwin made his defence, and purged himself before his lord the king and all the people, that he was guiltless of the crime charged on him and his sons. The king forgave him and his family, and restored them their possessions and the earldom. But the archbishop and all the Frenchmen were banished.²³

THE same power was exerted in 1055. A witena-gemot was assembled seven days before Mid-Lent, and eorl Elfgar was outlawed for high treason, or, as it is expressed, because he was a swica, a betrayer of the king and all his people. His earldom was given to another.²⁴

So all the optimates meeting at Cyrnceaster,

³³ Sax. Chron. 164. 23 Ib. 168- 24 Ibid. 169.

BOOK in the reign of Ethelred, banished Elfric for high treason, and confiscated all his possessions to the king. 25

AT a great council, held in 716, one of their main objects is expressed to have been to examine anxiously into the state of the churches and monasteries in Kent, and their possessions. 26

At these councils, grants of land were made and confirmed. The instances of this are innumerable. Thus, in 811, Cenwulf, at a very great council convened in London, gave some lands of his own right, with the advice and consent of the said council.27 It would be tedious to enumerate all the grants which we know of, where the consent of the council is stated. Many have been already alluded to.

At the council in 716, they forbad any layman taking any thing from the monastery therein named; and they freed the lands belonging to it from various impositions and payments. 28

AT the council in 824, they inquired into the necessities of the secular deputies, as well as into the monasterial disciplines, and into the ecclesiastical morals. Here a complaint was made

²⁵ MS. Claud. C. 9. 123, 124.

²⁶ Astle's MS. Chart. No. 2.

²⁷ Ibid. No. 8. But it would seem that even the kings could not grant lands without the consent of the witenagemot, for a gift of land by a king is mentioned: "Sed, quia non fuit de consensu magnatum regni, donum id non potuit valere. 1 Dug. Mon. 20.

³⁸ Ibid. No. 2.

by the archbishop, that he had been unjustly CHAP. deprived of some land. He cited those who withheld it. The writings concerning the land were produced, and viva voce evidence heard. The writings and the land were ordered by the council to be given to the archbishop. 29

At a council in 903, an ealdorman stated that his title deeds had been destroyed by fire. He applied to the council for leave to have new ones. New ones were ordered to be made out to him, as nearly similar to the former as memory could make them. ³⁰

What was done at one council was sometimes confirmed at another. Thus what was done in the great council in Baccanfield was confirmed in the same year at another held in July at Cloveshoe. So a gift at Easter was confirmed at Christmas.³¹

That the witena-gemot sometimes resisted the royal acts, appears from their not choosing to consider valid a gift of land by Baldred, king of Kent, because he did not please them.³²

THE witena-gemot frequently appears to us, in the Saxon remains, as the high court of judicature of the kingdom, or as determining disputed questions about land.

In 896, Æthelred, the ealdorman of Mercia, convened all the witan of Mercia, (which had not yet been reduced into a province,) the

²⁹ Astle's MS. Chart. No. 12. ³⁰ Ibid. No. 21.

³¹ Ibid. No. 2.; and MS. Claud. C. 9. 124.

³³ Spelm. Conc. p. 340.

BOOK bishops, ealdormen, and all the nobility, at Gloucester, with the leave of Alfred. "They consulted how they most justly might hold their theod-scipe, both for God and for the world, and right many men, both clergy and laity, concerning the lands, and other things, that were detained." At this gemot, the bishop of Worcester made his complaint of the wood-land of which he was deprived. All the witan declared that the church should have its rights preserved, as well as other persons. A discussion and an accommodation took place. 33

In another case of disputed lands, the bishop states, that he could obtain no right before Ethelred was lord of Mercia. He assembled the witan of Mercia at Saltwic, about manifold needs, both ecclesiastical and civil. "Then (says the bishop) I spoke of the monastery with the enge ze price, (conveyances of the land,) and desired my right. Then Eadnoth, and Alfred. and Ælfstan, pledged me that they would either give it to me, or would, among their kinsfolk, find a man who would take it on the condition of being obedient to me." No man, however, would take the land on these terms, and the parties came to an accommodation on the subject. 34

In 851, the monks of Croyland, having suffered much from some violent neighbours, laid their complaint before the witena-gemot. The king ordered the sheriff of Lincoln, and his

³³ Heming. Chart. i. p. 93. 34 Ibid. p. 120.

other officers in that district, to take a view of CHAP. the lands of the monastery, and to make their report to him and his council, wherever they should be, at the end of Easter. This was done, and the grievances were removed. 35

The power of the witena-gemot over the public gelds of the kingdom, we cannot detail. The lands of the Anglo-Saxons, the burghs, Taxation. and the people, appear to us, in all the documents of our ancestors, as subjected to certain definite payments to the king as to their lords; and we have already stated, that by a custom, whose origin is lost in its antiquity, among the Anglo-Saxons, all their lands, unless specially exempted, were liable to three great burdens, the building and reparation of bridges and fortifications, and to military expeditions. But what we now call taxation seems to have begun in the time of Ethelred, and to have arisen from the evils of a foreign invasion. Henry of Huntingdon, speaking of the payment of ten thousand pounds to the Danes, to buy off their hostility, says, "This evil has lasted to our days, and long will continue, unless the mercy of God interferes; for we now (in the twelfth century) pay that to our kings from custom, which was paid to the Danes, from unspeakable 36 terror." This payment, and those which followed, are

³⁵ Ingulf, p. 12. See other instances, Hem. p. 17. 27. 50.

³⁶ Hen. Hunt. lib. v. p. 357. Bromton, Chron. p. 879. Ingulf also complains heavily of these exactions, p. 55.

BOOK stated to have been ordered by the king and the witena-gemot. 37

UNDER sovereigns of feeble capacity, the witena-gemot seems to have been the scene of those factions which always attend both aristocracies and democracies, when no commanding talents exist to predominate in the discussions, and to shape the council.

The reigns of Ethelred the Second, and of the Confessor, were distinguished by the turbulence, and even treason of the nobles. Of the former, our Malmsbury writes, "Whenever the duces met in the council, some chose one thing and some another. They seldom agreed in any good opinion. They consulted more on domestic treasons, than on the public necessities." 38

It was indeed becoming obvious that the extreme independence of the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy, during the last two reigns, was destroying the monarchy and injuring the nation. And if the Norman Conqueror had failed in his invasion, and had not, by tightening the bonds of feudality, homage, wardship, and law, reduced

³⁷ Sax. Chron. 126. 132. 136. 140. 142. Unless we refer it to the Anglo-Saxon period, I do not see when the principle could have originated which is recognised in Magna Charta and in its preparatory articles, and is so concisely mentioned by Chaucer in these two lines.—

[&]quot;The king taxeth not his men, But by assent of the comminaltie."

Ecl. fol. p. 88.

³⁸ Malmsb. p. 63.

the diverging and contradictory power of the CHAP, nobility into a state of more salutary subordination, it would have become pernicious to the king and people, and even to itself; and have brought the land to that state of faction and civil warfare from which the Saxons had rescued it, and of which Poland and Albania have given us modern examples.

CHAP. VI.

Some General Principles of the Anglo-Saxon Constitution and Laws.

BOOK TROM a careful perusal of the laws, charters, and documents of the Anglo-Saxons which remain, the following may be selected as a statement of some of the great general principles of their constitution and laws.

> At the head of the state was THE KING; the executive authority of the nation, and an essential part of its legislature: the receiver and expender of all taxations; the center and source of all jurisprudence; the supreme chief of its armies; the head of its landed property; the lord of the free, and of all burghs, excepting such as he had consented to grant to others; the person intrusted to summon the witenagemot, and presiding at it; possessed of the other prerogatives that have been noticed; but elective, and liable to be controuled by the witena-gemot.

> Co-existing as anciently as the sovereign, if not anterior, and his elector, was A WITENA-GEMOT or parliament, consisting of the nobles holding land, including the superior thanes, and containing also milites, or those who were afterwards called knights, and likewise others without any designations, who were probably citizens and burgesses.

> A church establishment pervaded the country, consisting of archbishops, bishops, abbots, and priors, who were dignitaries sitting in the witena-gemot; comprising also inferior degrees of clergy, as deans, canons, archdeacons, priests. parochial rectors, &c.; besides the monks and nuns of their various cloisters.

The highest orders of nobility were open to the lowest CHAP. classes of life.

A nobility existed with the titles of ealdorman, hold, heretoch, eorl, and thegn. These titles were personal and not inherited. That of thegn was probably connected with their lands. Some part of the nobility were distinguished by their birth, others by their office. The possessed lands of all were transmissible to their heirs as they pleased by their wills; but no system of primo-geniture.

The landed property of the nation was generally bound to build castles and bridges, and to serve the king for a limited time, in his military expeditions, in proportion to the quantity of their land. To certain extents of it, independent legal jurisdictions were attached, exempt from all others.

An order of milites; made by the investment of the military belt, who were the privileged classes that served for the lands of the nobility and clergy and for their own, and who could not serve in the army in this rank nor command others until it had been conferred. These were the superior class of the free.

A class of freemen; with the king for their lord and defender, subject to no other master but whom they chose to

The majority of the population, slaves or bondsmen to the other classes of society, with many shades of servility or of employment; who had no constitutional or political right. but were part of the property of their master, and as such bought, sold, and transmissible at his pleasure; but for whose benefit the laws were watchful, and made from time to time various kind and superintending regulations, to promote their good usage and emancipation as well as good conduct.

No property of the nobility, elergy, or free, was taxed without the consent of these orders, given in the witena-gemot.

All the nobles and free were required to be always armed with arms appropriate to their condition.

All the free were required to place themselves in some tything, and every one was to be under bail for his general good behaviour, under certain regulations, and the bail were to answer for his quiet conduct.

BOOK VIII. Bail was to be given for all prosecutions, and for all defences.

Offences were punished by fines to the state, as well as by compensation to the party.

Every class had a pecuniary value fixed on it, at which each individual of it was estimated, called his were; and also another called mund, by which the value of his social peace was guarded.

A high regard for the personal liberty of the free subject, while unoffending against the laws; and repeated provisions made to punish those who imprisoned or bound him without legal justice.

Their principle of repelling criminal accusations was that of the accused producing a certain number of his neighbours, who swore to their belief of his innocence. Of this custom our habit of producing witnesses to character is a remnant. This imposed on every one the strongest obligation to maintain a good character in his neighbourhood.

To this principle was attached at length the right of trial by jury. No record marks the date of its commencement. It was therefore either one of their immemorial institutions, or was introduced by the Danish colonists among whose countrymen it prevailed.

From the extreme independence and violence of the great, and from the warlike spirit and habit of all their society, every stranger and traveller was considered as a suspected person, and jealously watched by many legal restrictions.

From the same cause, all purchases above a very small sum were required to be public, and in the presence of witnesses, in every city appointed for that purpose.

Although the right of property was a fixed principle among them, yet it was subject to certain rules, both of tenure and transmission, and to certain payments; but none of these seem to have been arbitrary, but all definite, known, and customary.

Public fairs at certain seasons, and markets every week, were allowed by law, and usually granted by charter. Tolls and payments to those entitled to receive them accompanied their sales; and tolls also were levied on the high roads on those who passed with traffic.

Every man was ordered to perform to others the right CHAP. that he desired to have himself.

Judges were warned that every act should be carefully distinguished, and the judgment be always given righteously according to the deed; and be moderated according to the degree of the offence.

The superior orders were emphatically enjoined to comfort and feed the poor; to gladden and not distress widows and orphans, and not to harrass or oppress strangers and travellers.

The witena-gemot declared that just laws should be established before God and the world, and that all that was unlawful should be carefully abolished; and that every man, poor or rich, should be entitled to his common rights, or, as they termed it, be worthy of his folk-right.

The principle of the laws was that of continual improvement, either by addition, annulment, or qualification, as circumstances required, and without any principle of immutability. The meetings of the witena-gemot gave the means of this improvement, and their laws for the conversion of slaves into free men, contrary to the interest of the chieftains, exhibited striking evidence of the impulse of the improving spirit.

That legal redress should be refused to no one, was one of Ina's laws, which enacted penalties on the shire-men or judges who gave refusal:

That revenge should not be taken personally till legal justice had been sought, was another.

The natural liberty of every individual was to be restricted by definite laws so far as social good required, but only by definite and previously enacted laws.

Not only the life and liberty of the free were strictly guarded by law, but every limb of the body had its protecting penalty, which was to be paid by those who injured it. that the safety of every individual might be reduced to as great a certainty as positive law and punishment could make it.

To discourage fighting and personal violence was a continual object of the witena-gemot; and also to repress those habits of reputable robbery and rapine which the powerful and warlike indulged in.

BOOK VIII.

The domestic peace of every individual was promoted by strong laws against trespasses in his house or lands; and every one was required to make hedges to keep his cattle from injuring another.

The observance of Sunday as a day of rest from all worldly labour was strictly enforced.

To abate the pride and violences of a powerful and oppressive aristocracy, the Anglo-Saxon clergy taught the natural equality of man, which Alfred also enforced.

But the gradation of ranks was a principle recognised by all the laws; and offences were differently punished according to the quality of both the offender and the offended.

Each class had its appropriate rights and protecting penalties, and its appointed redress; each was kept distinct, but each was rescued from the oppressions of the other; and the law and government, as far as they could operate, watched impartially over all, and for the benefit of all.

The character of individuals was protected as well as their right and property; and slanderous words were subjected to punishment.

The fair sex were taken by the law under its protection, and the principle of respecting and exalting it appears in one of our earliest laws, which placed the children, on the father's death, under the care of the mother; and by another forbidding concubinage; and by others protecting them from violence and forced marriages.

A tenderness even for animals appears in the provision that lambs should not be sheared before Midsummer.

WE will close this enumeration by adding the principles which appear in the laws of king Canute. —

That just laws shall be universally established.

We forbid that any Christian man should be consigned to death for a small cause, but rather that a peace-like punishment should be established for the public benefit; that man may not destroy the work of the Divine hands for a little cause, who was redeemed by so dear a price.

That it should be always contemplated in every way how the best councils may be adopted for the benefit of the

public:

That every one twelve winters old should swear that he CHAP. will not be a thief, nor the adviser of a thief:

That nothing shall be bought above four pennies worth, living or dead, without the true witness of four men.

No one shall receive another into his house for more than three days, unless one that had previously served him as a follower.

Every master shall be the pledge or bail for his own family, and answer for it, if accused.

If any friendless man or stranger be accused, so that he has no bail, he must be put into the pillory till he doth go to the ordeal.

A man convicted of perjury shall be disqualified for giving evidence afterwards.

Every man might hunt in his own wood and fields.

CHAP. VII.

Their Official and other Dignities.

Ealdor. man

BOOK THE EALDORMAN was the highest officer in - the kingdom. In rank he was inferior to an etheling; for when an etheling's were-geld was fifteen thousand thrymsas, an ealdorman's was but eight thousand. He was the chief of a shire, and he lost this dignity if he connived at the escape of a robber, unless the king pardoned him.2 He was one of the witan, who attended the witena-gemot. 3 He presided with the bishop at the scire-gemot, which he was ordered to attend 4, and the folc-gemot. 5 He ranked with a bishop 6, but was superior to the thegn.7 He had great civil powers in administering justice, and also enjoyed high military authority; he is mentioned as leading the shire to battle against the enemy.8 To draw weapons before him, incurred a penalty of one hundred shillings 9; and to fight before him in a gemot, incurred a fine to him of one hundred

³ Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 71. ³ Ibid. 20. 3 Ibid. 14.

⁴ Ibid. 78. 136. 5 Ibid. 42. 6 Ibid. 38.

⁷ Ibid. 22. 71. ⁸ Sax. Chron. p. 78.

⁹ Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 38.

and twenty shillings, besides other punish- CHAP. ments. The ealdorman is a title which occurs perpetually in the Saxon Chronicle.

The Eorl is a dignity recognised in our Eorl earliest laws. It appears in those of Ethelbert, who died in 616, where offences in the tune and against the birele of an eorl are expressly punished. He is also mentioned in a charter, dated 680. He is also noticed in the laws of Alfred, Edward, Ethelstan, and Edgar. 4

An eorl's heriot was four horses saddled and four horses not saddled, four helms, four mails, eight spears and shields, four swords, and two hundred mancusa of gold, which was twice a thegn's heriot. To be an eorl was a dignity to which a thegn might arrive 16, and even a ceorl. 17

In 656, Wulfer in his charter mentions the eorls: "I Wulfer, kyning, with the king and with eorls, and with herotogas, and with thegnas, the witnesses of this gift." The persons who sign this, with the king and clergy, call themselves ealdormen. The title of eorl occurs again in a grant of 675 19, and afterwards. 20

In the fragment of poetry in the Saxon Chronicle to the year 975, Edward, the son of

^{**} Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 42.

¹² Spelman. Concil. p. 164.

²⁴ Wilk. 35. 53. 70. 82.

¹⁶ Ibid. 71. ¹⁷ Ibid. 112.

¹⁹ Sax. Chron. p. 42.

¹¹ Ibid. p. 3.

¹³ Wilk. Leg. p. 7.

¹⁵ Ibid. 144.

¹⁸ Sax. Chron. p. 37.

²⁰ Ibid. 62.

BOOK Edgar, is called the eorla ealder; the ruler of eorls. 21

> In 966, Oslac is stated to have received his ealdordome. In 975, he is called se mære eorl, the great earl; and is stated to have been banished 22; he is also called ealdorman. 23 This same Oslac is mentioned in the laws of Edgar as an earl: "Then let Oslac eorl promote it, and all the army that in this ealdordome remaineth." 24 These passages induce a belief that eorl and ealdorman were but different denominations of the same official dignity. Yet, when we find in the Chronicle such distinctions, in the same paragraph, as "Ealfrice ealdorman, and Thorode eorl 25," we are led to imagine that there must have been some peculiar traits by which they were discriminated. But it is obvious, from the Saxon Chronicle, that eorldome 26 expressed the same thing that ealdordome has been applied to signify.

> In the latter part of the Anglo-Saxon period, the title ealdorman seems to have been superseded by that of eorl. 27 The iarl of the Northmen was the same title. We cannot now ascertain the precise distinction of rank and power that prevailed between the eorl and the ealdorman.

Heretoch. Hold.

THE term HERETOCH implies the leader of an army; and HOLD is mentioned as a dignity in

²² Ibid. 121. 123. 22 Sax. Chron. 123. 23 Ibid. 122.

²⁴ Wilk. Leg. Sax. 82.

²⁵ Sax. Chron. 127. .

²⁶ Sax. Ch. 168, 169.

²⁷ Ibid. 164-173.

Æthelstan's laws, whose were was higher than CHAP. that of a thegn. 28 Many persons with this VII. title are mentioned in the Saxon 29 Chronicle. in the years 905, 911.

THE GEREFAS were officers appointed by the Gerefa, or executive power, and in rank inferior to the eorl Reeve. or ealdorman. They were of various kinds. The heh-gerefa is mentioned, whose were was four thousand thrymsas. 30 Also the wic-gerefa, before whom purchases of the Kentishmen in London were to be made, unless they had good witnesses. 31 And the porte-gerefa, or the gerefa of the gate, who was to witness all purchases without the gate, unless other unimpeachable persons were present. 32

THE gerefas were in every byrig. 33 They were judicial officers 34, and were ordered to judge according to right judgment, and the dom-boc, or book of judgment. They delivered over offenders to punishment.35 They were present at the folc-gemot 36, where they were to do justice. They were ordered to convene a gemot every four weeks, to end 37 law-suits. They took bail or security in their respective shires for every one to keep the peace; and if they omitted to take the bail, and neglected their duty, they lost their office, and the king's

³⁹ Wilk. Leg. Sax. 71. ³⁹ Sax. Chron. 101, 103.

³º Wilk. Leg. 71. 31 Ibid. 9. 31 Wilk. Leg. 48.

³³ Ibid. 54, 55. 34 Ibid. 9. 12. 48, 49. 35 Ibid. 12.

³⁶ Ibid, 39, 41. 37 Ibid. 50.

BOOK friendship, and forfeited to him one hundred VIII. and twenty shillings. 38

In cases of robbery, application was to be made to the gerefa in whose district it was; and he was to provide as many men as were sufficient to apprehend the thief, and avenge the ³⁹ injury. If any one became "untrue" to every one, the king's gerefa was to go and bring him under bail, that he might be brought to justice to answer his accuser. If the offender could find no bail, he was to be killed. ⁴⁰ He was to supply such prisoners with food who had no relations that could support them. ⁴¹ He was to defend the abbots in their necessities. ⁴²

They were made responsible for their official conduct. If they neglected their duty, it was ordered, in the laws of Ethelstan, that they should be fined for their delinquency, and be displaced, and the bishop was to announce it to the gerefa in his province. If they broke the law, they had to pay five pounds the first time, the price of their were the second, and for the third offence they lost all their property.⁴³ If they took a bribe to pervert right, they were punished as severely.⁴⁴

³⁸ Wilk. Leg. 69. ³⁹ Ibid. 68. ⁴⁰ Ibid. 103.

⁴² Ibid. 34. ⁴² Ibid. 115. ⁴³ Ibid. 61.

⁴⁴ Ibid. 62. The exposition of the duties of an eorl, and the higher dignities, which exists in Anglo-Saxon, adds something to our notions of their character: "Eorls and heretogas, and the secular judges, and also the gerefas, must necessarily love justice before God and the world, and must never by unjust judgment lay aside their own wisdom

THE THEGNS of the Anglo-Saxons were in CHAP. rank below the eorls and ealdormen. They formed a species of nobility peculiar to those Thegn, or Thane. ancient times; and though, at this distant period, they cannot be delineated accurately, yet, from the circumstances which we can collect, we shall find them a very curious and interesting order of men.

It has been already mentioned, that it was a rank attainable by all, even by the servile, and that the requisites which constituted the dignity are stated in the laws to have been the possession of five hides of his own land, a church, a kitchen, a bell-house, a judicial seat at the burgh gate, and a distinct office or station in the king's hall. It is not clear whether this means an office in the king's household, or a seat in the witena-gemot. The latter has some probabilities in its favour.

But it was essential to a thegn, that he should be a landed proprietor; for though a ceorl had a helm, mail, and a gold-handled sword, yet if

for either enmity or friendship. They must not thus turn wrong into right, nor decree injustice to the oppression of the poor. They should, above all other things, honour and defend the church; they should protect widows and orphans, and help the needy, and watch to guard the enslaved. Thieves and robbers they should hate, and spoilers and plunderers destroy, unless they will amend and abstain for ever from their violences. For this is true which I say, believe it who will, 'Woe to those that inflict injury, unless they amend: most surely they shall suffer in the dim and deep caverns of the infernal punishments, apart from all help," &c. Lib. Const. Wilk. Leg. 149.

BOOK he had no land, the laws declare that he must viii. still remain a ceorl. 45

THE thegns were of two descriptions. The inferior sort was called thegn, and the superior were distinguished as king's thegns. The laws recognise these two descriptions. A king's thegn accused of homicide was to acquit himself of guilt by twelve king's thegns; a thegn of lessa maga, with eleven of his equals. 46 The here-geat, or heriot of the king's thegn that was nearest to him, was two horses saddled, and two not saddled, two swords, four spears, shields, helms, and mails, and fifty mancus of gold. But the here-geat of a middling thegn was but one horse, and his trapping and arms. 47 By comparing these heriots, we may see how greatly superior the rank of the king's thegn was esteemed.

The inferior thegns appear to have been numerous. In every borough, says a law, thirty-three thanes were chosen to witness. In small burghs, and to every hundred, twelve were to be selected. Thegns had halls.

THEGNS are twice mentioned in the laws as

⁴⁵ Wilk. Leg. 70.

⁴⁶ Ibid. 47. So the superior thane is mentioned in the laws as having a thane under him, serving him as his lord in the king's hall. Ibid. 71.

⁴⁷ Ibid. 144. The officers of the king's household were also called thegns, as his disc-thegn, hregel-thegn, horsthegn, or the thanes of his dishes, his wardrobe, and his horses.

⁴⁸ Ibid. 80. Their halls are often mentioned in Domes-day-book.

thegns born so.⁴⁹ Perhaps the title was at-CHAP. tached to their landed property, and descended with it. In the Domesday Survey, many lands are mentioned in several counties, which are called "Terra tainorum;" the land of the thegns; and they are mentioned also with their milites. Thegn-lands seem to have had some analogy with the baronies of the Norman times.

If a thegn had a church in his boclande, with a place of burial, he was to give to the church one-third of his own tenths; if he had not a burial-place, he was to give what he chose out of the nine parts. 5°

What Alfred calls the king's thegn is in Bede the king's minister.⁵¹ No one was to have any socne or jurisdiction over him but the king.⁵²

WE learn from Domesday-book, that for the tenure of five hides of land the owner was liable to the fyrd, or Saxon militia. We have also found, that the tenure of five hides of land was essential to the dignity of thegn. The king's thegn is mentioned in the laws as attending in his expeditions, and as having a thegn under him. ⁵³

⁴⁹ Wilk. Leg. 125. 27. 5° Ibid. 130. 144.

⁵¹ Bede, lib. ii. c. 9. and lib. iv. c. 22. Alfred, p. 511. and 591.

³² Wilk. Leg. 118. The thegn is not merely termed a liberalis homo, or free man, as in Tex. Roff. but his rank is mentioned in the higher degree of the comparative mood as one of the liberalioribus, one of the more free.

⁵³ Wilk. Leg. 71.

BOOK THE thegn was also a magistrate, and might lose his dignity. The laws declared, that if a judge decided unjustly, he should pay to the king one hundred and twenty shillings, unless he could swear that he knew no better; and he was to lose his thegn-scipe, unless he could afterwards buy it of the king. 54

> THEY are thus mentioned by Edgar: " In every byrig, and in every scire, I will have my kingly rights, as my father had; and my thegns shall have their thegn-ship in my time, as they had in my father's." 55

> His were was two thousand thrymsa. 56 It is elsewhere stated as equal to that of six ceorls, or twelve hundred shillings. 57 If a thief took refuge with a thegn, he was allowed three days' asylum. 58

54 Wilk. Leg. 78. 135. 55 Ibid. 80. 56 Ibid. 71.

57 Ibid. 64. 72. He is mentioned as synonimous with twelf-hynde man. Leg. Hem.; Wilk. 265.; and Du Cange voc. Liberalet. In another passage of the laws of Henry I. the twelf-hynde is mentioned as a man plene nobilis, and a thane, p. 269. Such a man was to swear as for sixty hydes of land. Wilk. 18. We may, therefore, consider this as the quantity of land of the higher thane. The comparative dignities of the land, in the time of Ethelstan, will appear from their different weres:

The king's was 30000 thrymsa. Etheling's, or king's son's, 15000 Bishop . 8000 Ealdorman 8000 Holdes and high-gerefa -4000 Mass thegn 2000 World's thegn ----2000 Ceorl ... 266

The judicial magistracy of the thegns appears CHAP. from their assisting at the shire-gemots. The Northmen had also a dignity of this sort, for thegns are mentioned in Snorre.

I am inclined to believe that the superior thanes were those who were afterwards called barons, for the laws of Henry the First puts the titles as synonimous ⁵⁹; and that the next dègree of thegns were those who were after the Conqueror's time termed knights, because five hydes of land were the feudum of a ⁶⁰ knight, and the thegn of five hydes of land is mentioned as that rank of thegn which served the more dignified thegns. ⁶¹ These inferior thanes were called middling thanes. ⁶² A general idea of an

³⁹ Thaini vel baronis. Wilk. Leg. p. 250. and 276. They are frequently classed with barons, as 272. The same is implied in the Hist. Rames., who uses the term baronis where the Saxon word would have been thegn, p. 395. So Hist. El. 475.

⁶ Quinque hidæ (faciunt) fædum militis. Chr. T. Red. ap. Blamt. voc. Virgata.

or Wilk. Leg. p. 71. The Epistle of the prior and convent of Canterbury to Henry II. states that before the Conqueror's time there were no knights in England but threnges, and that this king converted them into knights. Wilk. 429. This authority tends to show that Drenge was the Anglo-Saxon word at first applied to express their milites. It occurs frequently in their poems on martial subjects. The term cniht, at last superseded it. Drenches occur in Domesday.

⁶² In Saxon medeme, and in Latin mediocris. The comparative ranks in Henry the First's time appear thus in their relevationes: the comes eight horses, four helmets, four coats of mail, eight lances and shields, four swords, and one hundred mancæ of gold; the king's thegn, "who is next," four horses, two swords, four lances and shields, one helm

BOOK Anglo-Saxon nobleman may be formed from the note below, 63

> and mail, and fifty mancæ; the middling thane one horse, with his trappings and arms, and his half-hang. Leg. Hen. Wilk. 245. We may look on these as corresponding with the ranks of earls, barons, and knights.

> 63 The Monk of Ramsay has left a full picture of what was then deemed an accomplished nobleman in the following traits of the character of one of Edgar's favourites, and in Oswald's conversation with his brother: -

> "His innate prudence, his noble birth, and approved vigour of body in warlike affairs, had obtained from the king much dignity and favour. He was distinguished for religion at home, and for the exercise of his strength and use of military discipline abroad. He adorned the nobility which he derived from his birth by the beauty of his manners. Cheerful and pleasing in his countenance; venerable in his mien: courteous in his fluent conversation: mild and sincere in his words: in duty impartial; in his affections cautious; with a heart resembling his face; constant in good faith; steady and devout. In counsel persuading what was right: ending disputes by the equity of his judgments; revering the divine love in others, and persuading them to cultivate it."

> Oswald says of him: "Throughout the king's palace he was famed and esteemed; his nod seemed to govern the royal mind; clothed in silk and purple, he shared the royal banquets with us in the court," &c. His brother, also a favourite with the king, tells the bishop: " I am a man under the power of another, exercising also authority myself. Nobility of birth, abundance of wealth, the wisdom of the world, the grace of the lip, and the public favour, as well of the rich as of the poor, have alike exalted me; yet I cannot apply to the good studies which I desire. Often the king's difficulties, or warlike exercises, or the distributions of presents to the knights, or the judgment of causes, or the exercise of punishment on the guilty, or some other forensic business, which I can hardly if ever decline without offence, occupy and fatigue me." Hist. Ram. 3 Gale, 395, 396.

CHAP. VIII.

Some Features of the Political State of the Anglo-Saxons.

UR Saxon ancestors appear to us at first in that state in which a great nation is preparing to be formed on new principles, unattained by human experience before. The process was that of leading their population to such a practical system as would combine the liberty of the people with the independence and elevated qualities of a high spirited nobility, and with the effective authority of a presiding king, and of such wise and improving laws as the collected wisdom of the nation should establish from the deliberations of its witena-gemot, not legislating only for the powerful.

The first stage in this political formation was the diffusion and independence of a great and powerful nobility. After these were radically fixed in the land, the influence and prerogatives of the king were enlarged, and the numbers of the free were increased. A new bulwark was also raised for the benefit of all the three classes, in a richly endowed church, who, besides their political utility in supporting, as circumstances pressed, each order of the state from the oppres-

BOOK sions of the rest, introduced into the Anglo-Saxon mind all the literature it possessed. The course of events led all these great bodies into occasional collisions with each other, and with foreign invaders, till the actual practice of life had abated their mutual excesses and injurious powers. The nobility and great landed proprietors, however, still too much preponderated in their exclusive privileges, when the Norman Conquest occurred to fix them in a greater subordination to the crown and to the law than the Anglo-Saxon constitution permitted. From the time of the Conquest the English aristocracy declined into an inferior, but permanent state of power, more compatible with the freedom and prosperity of the nation, and the liberties of the people, while the number of the free were proportionably multiplied.

> THAT a great landed and independent aristocracy should have been first formed in the nation was the natural result of their mode of invading the Britons. Small fleets of Anglo-Saxon warriors successively landed, and forced from the Britons certain districts of the island, which their future warfare enlarged. Being comparatively few in number, the division of the conquered territory threw large tracts of land into the hands of the first chieftains and their followers, and the conquered natives were made their slaves. Their king being at first but one of themselves, elected as their war-king, had no pretensions to more power or prerogatives

than they chose to concede; and hence a mar- CHAP. tial aristocracy, headed by a king, became the prevailing character of the Anglo-Saxon body politic. Their feuds with each other led the weaker party at all times to seek aid from the king, and the people had no other asylum than his power from the violence of their superiors. Hence the royal authority was perpetually invited into greater power and activity for the general benefit; and the Christian clergy made it venerable to the nation by the religious considerations which they attached to it.

Thus the first state of the Anglo-Saxon nation was that of a great landed body, in proud independence, of fierce spirit, and attached to military habits. The rest of the nation were chiefly enslaved peasantry and domestics, and free burghs, with poor artisans, and tradesmen of small consideration and no gréater property; with a clergy that, in their tithes and church payments, and in the endowments of their monasteries, were sharing with the nobles the land and property of the country.

But the same evil existed among the Anglo-Saxons that attends every country in which the laws of property have become established, and to which extensive commerce has not opened its channels; that of continually having an unprovided population, which had their subsistence to seek and their love of consequence to gratify. The monasteries took off some portion of this disquieting body, which was the more formidable

BOOK to the peaceful from the warlike habits of the country; but the larger part sought their provision perpetually by the sword. Hence robbery and rapine became one of the main internal features of the country; and more of the laws of every Anglo-Saxon king were directed against such plunderers than to any other single subject. Hence the severity against those who had no lords or no friends to bail them. It was this habit that compelled the law to enjoin that every body should be armed, and have their appointed weapons ready, that the burghs and towns might be more secure, and the marauders repressed or pursued. The same cause urged Alfred and the witena-gemots to put every man into a state of bail for good behaviour, and to shackle what little trade there was, by making it illegal unless transacted before deputed officers and witnesses, and by treating every traveller as a suspicious wanderer. Hence all who could afford it had knights and retainers in their pay, to protect their property and persons from violence. Hence the laws against binding free men, and selling them and Christians for slaves; for by seizing those who had property, the violent extorted a ransom, or by disposing of them as slaves, extracted a profit from their misery. Hence we find amid the chronicles of the clergy repeated instances of land torn by force and rapine even from them. And we may form some notion of the amount and danger of these depredations by observing that, in the laws of Ina, they are described as of three

classes. While they did not exceed seven men together they were called thieves (theofas); but from that number to thirty-five they were called a hloth or band; when they were more than thirty-five they were termed an army. Each of these offences were differently punished. In the subsequent reigns we find ealdormen, thegns, and others possessing themselves of lands by force from weaker proprietors. 2

Much individual prosperity could not be expected from such habits; but the bounty of nature every year pours such riches from the earth, that, notwithstanding these habits of depredation, the property of the country could not fail to increase. Timber grows, grass diffuses itself, fruit trees blossom, and animals multiply, and minerals enlarge, whether man labours, idles, or combats. But there were plenty of slaves to pursue the husbandry that was needed, and therefore all the natural riches of animal, vegetable, and mineral production were perpetually accumulating in the country. These are the foundations of wealth in all, and though the Anglo-Saxons had at first but little external or internal traffic, and imperfect roads, except those left by the Romans, yet the permanent property of the country was increasing in the multiplied permanent comforts of each individual.

¹ 1 Leg. Ina. Wilk. 17.

² The instances of these are numerous. See of one single monastery, Hist. El. p. 466, 467. 469. 482, 483, 484, 485, &c. &c.

BOOK Every additional article of furniture or convenience from the forest or the mine; from the horns, hair, hides, or bones of his animals; every barn of corn, and stock of salted provision, or pile of turf, wood, or peat, beyond his immediate consumption, was, as well as the stones he dug from the quarry, or the articles he manufactured from his flax or metals, an accumulation of actual property to himself, and an augmentation of the general wealth of the nation. All these articles were every year accumulating in the country, and many were by degrees exchanged for the gold and silver, and natural produce of other countries, as slowly increasing trade gradually brought them from abroad. Hence every reign discovers to us some indication of an increasing affluence, as well as an increasing population of the Anglo-Saxon nation.

> THE progress of the Anglo-Saxons to wealth was accelerated by the previous civilisation of Britain. The Romans had retired from it but a few years before their invasion, and had raised many temples and buildings in the island, and filled them with appropriate furniture, of which much remained to assist the ingenuity and excite the taste of the new conquerors. That gold and silver had abounded in the island, while it was possessed by the Romans and Britons, the coins that have been found at every period since, almost every year, sufficiently testify; and it was the frequency of these emerging to view which made treasure-trove an important part of our ancient laws, and which is mentioned by

Alfred as one of the means of becoming wealthy. In the earliest Anglo-Saxon laws, almost all the penalties are pecuniary, in silver coin. That bullion was not deficient in the country, but was continually increasing, appears from the numerous instances of purchase monies given in gold and silver, either coined or by weight, for lands, of which the charters still remain. By the quantities of money given to buy land for a monastery, by one bishop and by its first abbot ³, it would appear that the church and monasteries had abundance of it;

³ Thus for the Ely monastery they paid to various persons the following sums:

100 pounds and a golden cross. 100 aureos. 60 pounds of silver, 20 aureos, 40 shillings, 15 pounds, 100 shillings, 7 pounds, 4 pounds, 15 pounds, 20 shillings, 30 aurei, 200 aurei, 30 aurei. 11 pounds, 20 pounds, 50 aurei, 8 pounds, 80 aurei. 200 aurei. 6 pounds, 8 pounds

12 pounds. 80 shillings, 7 pounds, 90 aurei. 112 memmi, 100 shillings, 20 shillings, 30 pounds. 40 shillings, 40 pounds, 4 pounds, 18 pence, 100 shillings, 15 pounds, 100 shillings, 50 aurei, 20 pounds, 10 aurei, 15 pounds, 100 aurei, 10 pounds, 40 aurei. 20 pounds, 11 pounds, 4 pounds. Hist. Eliens. 465-488.

VIII.

BOOK and indeed the pecuniary payments appointed for them, besides their tithes and presents, gave them great facilities of acquiring it 4, as the fines and gafols poured still more into the royal exchequer. The great quantity of payments recorded in Domesday-book, as due to the king, in pounds, shillings, and pence, from the various subdivisions of lands in every county, show both the diffusion and the abundance of bullion among the Anglo-Saxons. 5

> But our ancestors by their conquests among the Britons obtained immediately abundance of cattle, corn, slaves, agricultural instruments, and cultivated lands. They found in the island, as Gildas and Bede state, twenty-eight noble cities, and innumerable castles, with their walls. towers, and gates. Productive veins of copper, iron, lead, and even silver had been opened. A great supply of shell-fish, yielding a beautiful

⁴ Thus a plough-alms, fifteen days before Easter; St. Peter's penny on his anniversary; the church sceat on St. Martin's; the light-money thrice a year; and the soul sceat at every grave. Wilk. Leg. Sax. 121. The church sceat was enforced by Ina, under a penalty of forty shillings, and twelve times the money withheld. Ib. p. 15. Besides these certainties, a quantity of money was always coming to them from wills, as already noticed. Other occasions also produced it. Thus a thegn, to have his parish church dedicated, brought a silver scutella of forty shillings. Hist. El. 467.

⁵ That the clergy and monasteries advanced money to the landed proprietors, we have an instance in Ely monastery. Oslac had to pay the king Edgar one hundred aureos; he had not so much, and borrowed of the bishop forty aureos, for which he gave him forty acres. Hist. El. 476.

scarlet die; and muscles with pearls, mostly white, but some of other colours abounded on their shores. The marine animals, whales, seals, and dolphins, frequented the coasts; salmons and other fish their rivers; and eels and water-fowl their pools and marshes. Vines in some places, and useful forests in all, increased their general resources of natural wealth.

SETTLING in a country thus abundantly supplied with the means of affluence, it is not surprising that the Anglo-Saxons became a prosperous people, notwithstanding the retarding effects of their military and predatory habits. After the reign of Alfred they became gradually more commercial. The invasions of the Danes had the effect of connecting them with the countries in the north of Europe, and of leading them to distant voyages of intercourse and traffic. Their progress was such, that by the time of the Norman invasion they had become both populous and rich. Some evidence of their extending intercourse is given by the facts, that some Moors or Africans, as well as Spaniards, were in the country at that time. 7

From the views that have been presented of the Anglo-Saxon classes of society, it is obvious that their unprovided poor must have been chiefly of the free. The vassal peasantry of the

⁶ See Gildas, and Bede's Hist.

⁷ Domesday-book mentions Matthæus de Mauritanie; and also a Servus, who was an Afrus, in the county of Gloucester; also Alured as Hispanus. P. 165. 170. 162. 86.

BOOK great and the clergy had their masters to depend upon or to relieve them. But when the freemen were destitute, their situation must have been deplorable. Jealously suspected and pursued by the laws, if they wandered to seek or solicit subsistence; they had no resource, if they could not join armies, or become minstrels and jugglers, or be enlisted as retainers in the service of the great, but to engage as servants to burghers and others, or to become robbers, outlaws, and foresters. Poor freemen are several times noticed in Domesday.8

> It is perhaps in no age from the insufficient productions of nature that any would perish from want. The existing food on the earth always exceeds the wants of its actual inhabitants; but it cannot be distributed by any laws or polity just as individual necessities require. It can only flow to all through the regular channels of civilised society, on the system of equivalent exchange; and the means of acquiring this, frequently fail. It is from the temporary want of an equivalent to exchange for the food they need, and not from the non-existence of that food, that so much misery usually pervades society, and at times rises to an afflicting height. Yet the evil cannot be remedied by a legislature without invading those sacred rights of property which are the cement of the social fabric. Benevolence must effect on this point what no law

As in Suffelk, fifty-four freemen satis inopes.

can command. The poor can only put themselves in possession of equivalents to exchange for food by their personal industry. Where the demand for their labour declines, a wise and discriminating charity must be active to contrive employments for the distressed, that they may acquire the means of obtaining subsistence from those who have it to dispose of, or must in her-kindness distribute that subsistence without the equivalent, until increasing occupation can enable the distressed again to provide it.

These principles were not understood by our ancestors; yet the benevolent feelings of the clergy were always labouring to impress on the affluent the duty of succouring the needy. The church gave them the emphatic name of "the poor of God;" and they are frequently so mentioned in the laws: thus presenting them in the most interesting of all relations, as those which the Deity himself presents to human benevolence as his peculiar class, and for whom he solicits our favourable attentions.

But the supplies from individual liberality are always precarious, and usually temporary, and not so salutary to the necessitous as those which, with a conscious exertion of power, independence, and self-merit, they can obtain by their own industry. It was therefore a great blessing to the Anglo-Saxon society, that, as their population increased, an augmented traffic arose, and employments became more numerous. The property of the land-holders gradually mul-

VIII.

BOOK tiplied in permanent articles raised from their animals, quarries, mines, and woods; in their buildings, their furniture, their warlike stores, their leather apparatus, glass, pigments, vessels, and costly dresses. An enlarged taste for finery and novelty spread as their comforts multiplied. Foreign wares were valued and sought for; and what Anglo-Saxon toil or labour could produce, to supply the wants or gratify the fancies of foreigners, was taken out to barter. All these things gave so many channels of nutrition to those who had no lands, by presenting them with opportunities for obtaining the equivalents on which their subsistence depended. As the bullion of the country increased, it became, either coined or uncoined, the general and permanent equivalent. As it could be laid up without deterioration, and was always operative when it once became in use, the abundance of society increased, because no one hesitated to exchange his property for it. Until coin became the medium of barter, most would hesitate to part with the productions they had reared, and all classes suffered from the desire of hoarding. Coin or bullion released the commodities that all society wanted, from individual fear, prudence, or covetousness, that would for its own uses have withheld them, and sent them floating through society in ten thousand ever dividing channels. The Anglo-Saxons were in this happy state. Bullion, as we have remarked, sufficiently

abounded in the country , and was in full use CHAP. in exchange for all things. In every reign after Athelstan the trade and employment of the country increased. Pride and the love of pleasure favoured their growth, and still more the fair taste for greater conveniences in every class of society. Population multiplied, and found more occupation for the numbers of its free classes, until it reached that amount at the time of the Conquest, which we shall proceed to enumerate.

9 Many facts are mentioned in the Chronicles, implying the quantity of the valuable metals in the monasteries, &c. Thus Hereward in his romantic attack of Peterborough, took from the crucifix there the crown of pure gold, and its footstool of red gold; the cope, all of gold and silver, hidden in the steeple; also two gilt shrines, and nine of silver; fifteen great crosses of gold and silver; and "so much gold and silver, and so much treasure in money, robes, and books, that no man can compute the amount." Gurney's Sax. Chron. p. 215.

CHAP, IX.

Sketch of the Anglo-Saxon Population.

BOOK IN Domesday-book, we have a record of the Anglo-Saxon population, which, though not complete, yet affords us sufficient information to satisfy our general curiosity. The following summary has been taken from its statement. For the convenience of the reader the counties there noticed will be enumerated alphabetically here.

BEDFORDSHIRE (Bedefordscire).

Chief proprie	etors 55	Molendini	86
Prefects of th	he .	Silvatici	72
king and o	thers 21	Milites	5
Villani	1766	Tenentes	102
Bordarii	1113	Piscatores	. 1
Servi	454	Burgesses of	
Sochmanni	88	Bedford	9

3772

BERKSHIRE.

Chief proprietors	63	Molini	166
Other persons	13	Piscar.	70
Villani	2424	Silvat.	67
Bordarii	1802	Others	169
Cotarii	732	Hagas noticed	459
Servi	772		

AP.

					CH
Виски	NGHAM	SHIRE (Bockingamscire).			Ĺ
			100		-
Chief proprietors	56	Molini	129		
King's thanes	12	Silvatici	122		
Villani	2885	Moldarii	1		
Bordarii	1320	Cotarii	10		
Servi	828	Burgenses of Buck	52		
Sochmanni	19	Others	110		
Piscatores	19	•			
				5563	
CAM	RRIDG	ESHIRE (Grentebrscire).			
CAM	BRIDG	ESHIKE (Grewebiserie).			
Chief proprietors	42	Mol.	121		
Villani	1898	Porcarii	7		
Bordarii	1438	Silvatici .	26		
Servi	563	Tenentes	53		
Cotarii	742	Milites	34		
Sochmanni	245	Others	6		
Mold.	2	Burgenses of			
Pisc.	34	Cambridge	295		
				5506	
11 0000					
	CHESI	HIRE (Cestrescire).			
Villani	768	Salinæ	10	100	
Bordarii	633	Tenentes	72		
Servi	223	Francigenæ	39		
Bovarii	184	Milites	12		
Radmanni	134	Drenches	54		
Silvatici	127	Burgenses, C.	559		
Piscat.	29	Others	29		
2 10000					
				2873	
	CORNE	VALL (Cornvalgie).			
251	CORNI	ALL (Cornuargie).			
Chief proprietors	6	Mol.	. 4		
Villani -	1738	Pasturæ	109		
Bordarii	2441	Silvæ	38		
Servi	1148	Cerevisarii	40		
Coliberti	49	Tenentes	23		
Salinæ	10				
				FCOC	

BOOK VIII.

DERBYSHIRE (Derbyscire)

Chief proprietors	15	Mol.	68
Taini	22	Silvæ	71
Villani	1825	Presbyters	51
Bordarii	731	Tenentes	167
Servi	16	Censarii	41
Sochmanni	127	Others	6

3140

DEVONSHIRE (Devonscire).

Chief proprietors 50 Salinæ 11	8
Taini 18 Mol. 7	9
Servientes regis 8 Pasturæ 24	9
Villani 8246 Silvæ 15	7
Bordarii 4814 Tenentes 11	8
Servi 3210 Burg. of Exeter 47	6
Cotarii 19 Barnstaple 8	3
Coleberti 32 Lideford 6	9
Coscez 32 Totness 11	0
Porcarii 296 Ochemanton	4
Piscat. 17 Others 4	1

18245

Dorset (Dorseti).

Chief proprietors	56	Silvæ	239
Villani	2663	Moleni	269
Bordarii	2827	Censorii	9
Servi	1165	Burgenses	655
Cotarii	185	Liberi hom.	10
Coleberti	33	Taini	127
Salinarii	100	Taini proprietors	24
Pasturæ	334	Other persons	37
Coscez	146	-0 :1941	
		,	

	Essex (Excessa).		۴	CHAP.
					~
Chief proprietors	79	Piscat .		48	
Villani .	4014	Salinæ		28	
Bordarii	6329	Others		30	
Servi	2041	Censarii		36	
Sochmanni	343	Burg. of		180	
Liberi homines	306		Orsett	100	
Mol.	129		Sudbury	5	
Silvæ /.	437		Colchester	400	
Presbyters	44		-		
				14549	
Groud	CESTERSHIR	E (Glowe	cesterscire).		
Chief proprietors	66	Mol.		254	
Taini	16	Silvæ		45	
Villani	3071	Piscat.		90	
Bordarii	1901	Salinæ		7	
Servi	2423	Others		124	
Radchenistri	119	Burgens	es, &c.	144	
Coleberti	105	ŭ			
				8365	
	Нами	SHIRE.			
General amount	-	-	- !	9807	
Isle of Wight		-	-	824	
				10631	
	Herefo	RDSHIRE			
Chief proprietors	37	Cotarii		19	
Villani	2052	Mol.		95	
Bordarii	1381	Sylvæ		45	
Servi	966	Piscat.		12	
Bovarii "	130	Porcarii		14	
Radchenistri	41	Salinæ		8	
Radmanni	38	France-	genæ	23	
0.1.1		D 1		00	

Presbyters

16

Coleberti

288	Mg.	HIS	TORY OF THE		
воок	Prepositi	. 33	Buri	18	
VIII.	Bedelli	21	Clerici	19	
~	Liberi	15	Other persons	26	
	Homines	204	Subtenentes	. 78	
	Wallenses	41	Hereford burg.	70	
	Fabri :	23	Clifford burg.	16	
	Milites	34	Another	9	
				-	
					5510
	HE	RTFORI	SHIRE (Herfordscire).		
	Chief proprietors	43	Silvatici	87	
	Taini regis	12	Mold.	9	
*	Villani .	1763	Tenentes	194	
	Bordarii .	1118	Burgenses of		
	Servi	575	Escewille	14	
	Cotarii	853	St. Alban's	46	
	Sochmanni	. 57	Berchamsteed	52	
	Mol.	95	Stanestede	6	
				-	4924
	Hunt	INGDO	NSHIRE (Huntedunscire)		4924
	Chief proprietors		Piscatores		
	Taini	7	Silvatici	12 28	
	Villani	1886	Presbyters and eco		
	Bordarii	383	Tenentes		
	Sochmanni	23	Milites	42	
	Molin.	. 33	Homines	16 B	
	, and the same of	. 00	Labilities	5	
					2511
		Ke	ENT (Chenth).		2011
	Chief proprietors	305	Piscat.	158	
	Villani	6676	Burghers of	200	
	Bordarii	3367	Dover	42	
	Servi	1142	Canterbury	1600	
	Cotarii	308	Sandwich	415	
	Molin.	212	Rochester	7	
	Mol.	107	Romeney	166	
	Salinæ	130	Hide	231	

L	CESTE	RSHIRE (Ledecestre).		CHA
Chief proprietors		Presbyteri	84	~
Villani	2446	France-Genæ	37	
Bordarii	1285	Tenentes	101	
Servi	374	Milites	27	
Sochmanni	1716	Others	9	
Molin.	105	Burgenses	371	
Silvæ	56	Dungemoos		
			66	3
	Lı	NCOLNSHIRE.	•	
Tenentes	68	Salinæ	361	
Taini	27	Piscarii	211	
Sochmanni 1	1,322	Censorii	20	
Villani	7168	Burgenses	274	
Bordarii	3737	Other persons	260	
Molini	414	Lincoln mans.	982	W.
Moldarii	76	Stamford	317	
Silvæ	252	Terchesey	102	
Ecclesiæ	226			
			25,81	17
	. 7			
	T)	IIDDLESEX.		
Chief proprietors	23	Molini	34	•
Villani	1124	Silvæ	35	
Bordarii	367	Tenentes	106	
Servi	112	Stanes burg.	46	
Cotarii	442			
		i i	228	39
	Mann	OV W (Nondfole)		
	NORE	OLK (Nordfolc).		
Chief proprietors	62	Silvæ	180	
Villani	4528	Ecclesiæ	159	
Bordarii	8679	Piscatores	72	
Servi	1066	Salmæ	240	
Sochmanni	5521	Vara apium	187	
Liberi homines	4981	Other persons	61	
Molini	403	Burg. Norwich	883	

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VOL. III.

290		HISTOR	Y OF THE		
BOOK VIII.	Others there Bordarii there	68 480	Yarmouth Thetford	70 725	
				2	28,365
	North	AMPTONS	HIRE (Northantscir	e).	
	Chief proprietors	62	Silvæ	112	
	Villani	3901	Milites	50	
	Bordarii	2011	Tenentes	125	
	Servi	879	Presbyteri	55	
	Sochmanni	915	Other persons	11	
	Molini	249.	Burg. North.	295	
			pend		8665
	North	ICH A MSHI	RE (Snotinghamscir	·e).	
	Chief proprietors	28	Presbyteri	63	
	Taini	26	Piscatores	32	
	Villani	2555	Tenentes	201	
	Bordarii	1099	Other persons	44	
	Servi	26	Censorius	2	
	Sochmanni	1565	Burg. Nottingh.	363	
	Molini	118	Derby, were	243	
	Silvæ	69	Others	56	
					6490
		RUTL	ANDSHIRE.		
	Villani	722	Sochmanni	2	
	Bordarii	109			
					833
		Oxro	RDSHIRE.		
	Chief proprietors	77	Silvæ	41	
	Villani	3525	Pasturæ	32	
	Bordarii	1838	Salina	1	
	Servi	938	Houses in Ox-		
	Piscatores	38	ford were	.721	
	Molini	170	Other persons	80	
			Leaven		

SE	HROPSHIRE	(Sciropescire).			CHAP
Chief proprietors	9	Presbyteri	54		-
	1726	Molini	88		
	1118	Silvæ	69		
Servi	991	Piscatores	31		
Bovarii	388	Salinæ	6		
Radmanni	173	Wallenses	64		
Radchenistri	3	Tenentes	98		
Cotarii	24	Other persons	193		
Cosces	5	Burgenses	191		
Coliberti	13	-			
				5344	
Som	ERSETSHIF	RE (Summersete).			
Chief proprietors	46	Gablatores	7		
King's thanes	17	Burgenses			
Other proprietors	11	Bath, Bade	30		
	4947	Tautone	64		
Bordarii	4377	Lanperth	39		
	1565	Alsebruge	32		
Coliberti	156	Givelcestre	108		
Cotarii -	299	Meleburn	61		
Cosces	43	Bremet	17		
Piscarii	21	Bristow	10		
Porcarii	57	Masuræ	22	•	
Molini	323	Subordinate te-			
Pasturæ	156	nentes	205		
Silvæ	206		_		
			1	2,819	
STAF	FORDSHIRE	E (Statfordscire).			
Chief proprietors	16	Piscarii	2		
King's thanes	18	Liberi homines	20		
	1758	Milites	5		
Bordarii	897	Burgenses	217		
Servi :	230	Other persons	24		
Molini .	62	Subordinate te-		-011	
Silvæ	143	nentes	84		
Presbyteri	22			- 7	
				3495	

104		21201010		
BOOK VIII.		SUFFOLK	(Sudfulc).	
VIII.	Chief proprietors	72	Silvæ	152
•	Villani	3024	Molendini	220
	Bordarii	6292	Ecclesiæ	358
	Servi	947	Piscatores	60
	Sochmanni	1014	Salinæ	18
	Liberi homines	8012	Burgenses 1	1924
	,		_	
				22,095
,		SURRY	(Sudrie).	
	Chief proprietors	40	Silvæ	86
	Villani	2327	Piscarii	16
	Bordarii	921	Porcarii & others	23
	Servi	469	Milites	6
	Cotarii	288	Sochmanni	9
	Molini	121	Lib. homines	4
	Ecclesiæ	62	Burg. Gildeford	175
	9.0			
				4547
		Sussex	(Sudsexe).	
	Tenentes	753	Berquarii	10
	Villani	5866	Propositus manerii	1
	Bordarii	2510	Molini	148.
	Cotarii	738	Hagæ	26
	Servi	415	Salinæ	285
	Oppidani and		Piscariæ	30
	Burgenses	830	Ecclesiæ	103
	Presbyteri	3		
				11,718
	WA	RWICKSHIR	E (Warwicscire).	
	Chief proprietors		Tenentes	109
	and Thanes	43	Liberi homines	20
	Villani •	3537	Milites	24
	Bordarii	1705	Francigeni	15
	Servi	726	Other persons	61
	Molini	121	Burgenses of	
	Silvæ	110	Warwick	398
	Presbyteri	59	Tamewerd	10
	Salinæ	3		

WILTSHIRE	Wiltescire).
ALIPIONIUE A	I TT ISSCOULT C 10

CHAP.

Chief proprietors	66	Coleberti	252
Villani	3290	Porcarii	87
Bordarii	2713	Pasturæ	206
Servi	1475	Silvæ	143
Cosces	1385	Ecclesiæ	29
Cotarii	284	Burgenses	371
Molini	404	Other persons	44

10,749

WORCESTERSHIRE (Wirecestrescire).

Chief proprietors	27	Bovariæ	65
Villani	1524	Molini	107
Bordarii	1725	Silvæ	87
Servi	813	Salinæ	50
Cotarii	39	Piscarii	18
Cotmanni	19	Francigenæ	28
Radchenistri	2	Presbyteri	21
Radmanni	52	Other persons	93
Coleberti	9	Burgenses	242

4916

YORKSHIRE (Euruicscire).

Chief proprietors	65	Piscarii	61
Villani	5061	Censores	36
Bordarii	1842	Coteros	16
Sochmanni	438	Other persons	68
Molini	103	Tenentes, about	200
Silvæ	122	Burg. of York	1716
Presbyteri	130	Other burghers	110

9968

General total 300,785

BOOK VIII.

DANISH COUNTIES.

Norfolk	28,365	Essex	14,549
Lincolnshire	25,819	Yorkshire	9,968
Suffolk.	22,093		
			100,794

OTHER COUNTIES PLACED ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER

Devonshire	18,205	Buckinghamshire	5,563
Kent	14,866	Herefordshire	5,510
Somerset	12,819	Cambridgeshire	5,506
Sussex	11,718	Shropshire	5,344
Wilts	10,749	Herts	4,924
Hampshire	10,631	Worcestershire	4,916
Dorset	8,879	Surry	4,547
Northamptonshire	8,665	Bedfordshire	3,772
Gloucestershire	8,365	Staffordshire	3,498
Oxfordshire	7,461	Derbyshire	3,140
Warwickshire	6,941	Cheshire	2,873
Berkshire	6,737	Huntingdon	2,511
Leicestershire	6,613	Middlesex	2,289
Nottinghamshire	6,490	Rutland	833
Cornwall	5,606		
			199,991

TOTAL.

Danish count	ies	-		-		100,794
The others	5	-	-	-	-	199,991

Persons mentioned in Domesday book ² 300,785

I have taken the numbers for Hampshire and Sussex from Mr. Rickman's enumeration; and have, in all the rest, assumed, as he has done in these, a man for every silva, molinum, pastura, domus, &c. that is mentioned.

THESE may be considered as so many families, CHAP. and if we take five as the general average of a IX. family for all the counties, it would make the Anglo-Saxon population actually alluded to, at the time of the Conquest, 1,504,925, or a million and a half; but this enumeration was made after the destructive wars between William and the English 2, and after his dreadful devastation of Yorkshire, which left one hundred miles of the country, north of the Humber, a mere desart3; hence the number of that county is so small. Four counties are also entirely omitted: as Cumberland, Durham, Lancaster, and Northumberland. 4 But London, a century afterwards, is stated to have furnished sixty thousand fighting men 5; therefore its population cannot have then been less than three hundred thousand persons. In Domesday-book it is also obvious that all the burghers, or actual inhabitants of the

The effects of these wars appear frequently in Domesday. Thus in the county of Dorset, it is said that in Dorchester were, in the time of the Confessor, 172 houses, but that 100 had been entirely destroyed; so in Wareham 143, of which 73 were "penitus destructæ;" so in Shaftesbury 38 out of 104, p. 75. So in Oxford, though 243 houses paid gold, yet 478 had become so "vastæ" as to yield none. In Ipswich 328 were "vastatæ." In York 540 are noticed as "vacuæ." Many such occur in other counties.

³ See Turner's Hist. Eng. vol. i.

⁴ These were the border counties, the seat of almost continual warfare; and part of them were then in the power of Malcolm, the king of Scotland, especially Cumberland and Durham.

⁵ See Stephanides's Life of Becket.

BOOK cities and burghs, are not mentioned. When Canterbury was burnt by the Danes in 1006, it contained eight thousand men, of whom only eighty-four survived the ruin. Only one thousand six hundred are mentioned in Domesdaybook eighty years afterwards, though a city so venerated and celebrated must have recovered its prosperity. But in other cities and towns it is manifest that almost all the residents are omitted; as in Bristol, where only ten are noticed, though this was at that time a great trading city; only seventy at Yarmouth; fiftytwo only at Buckingham; nine only at Bedford; five at Sudbury; seventy at Hereford; fortytwo at Dover; and but forty-six at St. Alban's, though a place peculiarly frequented and respected. Winchester, though then a large town, is not mentioned.

> ALL the monks, and nearly all the parochial clergy, are omitted. 6 So in the different counties it will be found that, excepting in the Danish counties, and in Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire, which they also pervaded, very few of the actual freemen are enumerated. It would seem as if those persons were chiefly, if not only, recorded whose lands and tenements rendered some payments or services to the crown or state, or had been supposed to do so. Hence there is a careful enumeration of the extent and

⁶ We may infer the extent of the omission as to the parochial clergy from recollecting that the parish churches in England, in the middle ages, were stated to be 46,822.

cultivators of the lands which had to defend CHAP. themselves; that is, to contribute to the military force of the country in the proportions alluded to, but little more than this is attended to; and though this contribution was a very general obligation on the landed property of the country, yet the charters show us that some parts were exempt from it. If we take all these things into consideration, we shall perceive that the Anglo-Saxon population, in the period just before the Norman conquest, must have exceeded two MILLIONS.

This enumeration intimates to us the political benefits which resulted from the invasions of the Northmen. They appear to have planted in the colonies they occupied a numerous race of freemen; and their counties seem to have been well peopled. Thus,

In Essex	343	sochmanni.
	306	liberi homines.
Leicestershire	1716	sochmanni.
Lincolnshire	11,322	sochmanni.
Nottinghamshire	1565	sochmanni.
Norfolk	5521	sochmanni.
	4981	lib. hom.
Suffolk	8012	lib. hom.
	1014	sochmanni.
York	438	sochmanni.

This enumeration of the population shows how large a proportion of Englishmen were then in the servile state; for that villani were in a state of bondage is manifest from the manner in which they are mentioned in our

BOOK ancient Glanville 7, Bracton, and Fleta 8, who say that even holding a freehold does not give liberty to a villanus, a remark not observed by those who have deemed villani free peasants. because they were found to have lands. The bordarii, servi, cotarii, cosces, &c. were similarly circumstanced. In Domesday-book, burghers are mentioned as having bordarii under them. There can be no doubt that nearly three-fourths of the Anglo-Saxon population were in a state of slavery; and nothing could have broken the powerful chains of law and force by which the landed aristocracy held their people in bondage but such events as the Norman conquest, and the civil wars which it excited and fostered, and in which such numbers of the nobility perished; and also that wise and humane law which directed that if a slave was not claimed by his lord within a limited period, he should be presumed to be free. It was perhaps as much by the destruction of the Anglo-Saxon great proprietors as by their own colonists near the Baltic, that the number of the free were so numerous in the districts where the Danes had predominated.

7 P. 74.

8 P. J. and S.

BOOK IX.

THEIR POETRY, LITERATURE, ARTS, AND SCIENCES.

CHAP. I.

Their Native or Vernacular Poetry.

A S poetry has been always classed among the most interesting productions of the human mind, few topics of human research are more curious than the history of this elegant art, from its rude beginning to that degree of excellence to which it has long been raised by our ingenious countrymen.

In no country can the progress of the poetical genius and taste be more satisfactorily traced than in our own. During that period which this work attempts to commemorate, we find it in its earliest state. It could, indeed, have been scarcely more rude, to have been at all discernible. But though its dress was homely, and its features coarse, yet it was preparing to assume the style, the measures, and the subjects, which in subsequent ages were so happily displayed as to deserve the notice of the latest posterity.

BOOK THE poetry of the Anglo-Saxons was of two sorts; the poems which they composed in their own tongue, and the poems which they wrote in Latin. These two kinds of poetry were completely distinct from each other; - distinct in origin; distinct in style.

Their Native Poetry.

THE Anglo-Saxon native poetry may be distinguished into its mind and its style.

In the mind of poetry we look for its imagination, its feeling, and its force of thought; but these in all ages obey and display the tastes, sentiment, and habits of the passing day. In the Anglo-Saxon times, though women were highly respected and valued, yet that cultivated feeling which we call love, in its intellectual tenderness and finer sympathies, was neither predominant nor probably known. The stern and active passions were the rulers of society, and all the amusements were gross or severe. Women were reverenced, but not loved; and hence, except in the little effusions which have been noticed of our self-cultivated Alfred, there is no affectionate allusion to the fair sex in any Anglo-Saxon poem.

WAR and religion were the absorbing subjects of this period, and all the imagination, and feeling, and thought which exist in the Anglo-Saxon poetry are connected with one or both of these topics. There can be no poetry without imagination and feeling; but these endeared qualities appear in different nations, and in

different states of society in very dissimilar CHAP. forms.

In the Anglo-Saxon poetry they took the peculiar shape of the metaphor and the periphrasis. The imagination exerted itself in framing those abrupt and imperfect hints or fragments of similes which we call metaphors, and the feeling expressed its emotions by that redundant repetition of phrases which, though it added little to the meaning of the poet's lay, was yet the emphatic effusion of his heart, and excited consenting sympathies in those to whom it was addressed. This habit of paraphrasing the sentiment is the great peculiarity of the mind of the Anglo-Saxon poetry; the metaphor may be frequently observed, but the periphrasis is never long absent.

The style of their poetry was as peculiar. It has been much disputed by what rules or laws the Saxons arranged their poetical phrases. I have observed a passage in the general works of Bede which may end the controversy, by showing that they used no rules at all, but adopted the simpler principle of consulting only the natural love of melody, of which the human organs of hearing have been made susceptible; and of using that easy allocation of syllables which pleased the musical ear. In defining rythmus, Bede says:

"It is a modulated composition of words, not according to the laws of metre, but adapted in the number of its syllables to the judgment of the ear, as are the verses of our vulgar (or native) poets."—

BOOK IX. "Metre is an artificial rule with modulation; rythmus is the modulation without the rule. For the most part, you find, by a sort of chance, some rule in rythm; yet this is not from an artificial government of the syllables, but because the sound and modulation lead to it. The vulgar poets effect this rustically; the skilful attain it by their skill: as,

> Rex eterne! Domine! Rerum Creator omnium! Qui eras ante secula!

From this passage it is obvious that Bede's poetical countrymen wrote their vernacular verses without any other rule than that of pleasing the ear. To such a selection and arrangement of words as produced this effect, they added the habit of frequently omitting the usual particles, and of conveying their meaning in short and contracted phrases. The only artifices they used were those of inversion and transition.

Their Periphrasis. THE most ancient piece of Anglo-Saxon poetry which we possess is that fragment of the song of the ancient Cædmon which Alfred has inserted in his translation of Bede. Cædmon was a monk who accustomed himself to religious poetry, which he began late in life. He died in 680.

THE fragment, which has descended to us, he made on waking in a stall of oxen which he was appointed to guard during the night. The original shows the rythm to which Bede alludes:

Now we should praise

The Guardian of the heavenly pearon picer pears;
kingdom;

^{*} Bedæ Op. vol. i. p. 57.

² Bede, iv. 24. Alfred has preserved the Saxon.

The mighty Creator, And the thoughts of his mind, Glorious Father of his works! As he, of every glory Eternal Lord! Established the beginning; So he first shaped The earth for the children of men. And the heav'ns for its canopy. Holy Creator! The middle region, The Guardian of Mankind. The Eternal Lord. Afterwards made The ground for men, Almighty Ruler!

Oetober milite. And hir mod zerhanc, Weonc pulson ræsen! Sva he pulbner zehpær Ece Snihren! Ono onreale; De æpert zercop Conchan beannum, Deoron to nore. Daliz revppens! Tha mibban zeapb, Mon cinner peans, Ece Smhone, Ærren reobe Finum rolban; Frea almihtiz! Alfred's Bede, 597. CHAP.

In these eighteen lines the verbal rythm and periphrasis of the style are evident. Eight lines are occupied by so many phrases to express the Deity. These repetitions are very abruptly introduced; sometimes they come in like so many interjections:

The Guardian of the heavenly kingdom;
The mighty Creator —
Glorious Father of his works! —
Eternal Lord!—
Holy Creator!
The Guardian of Mankind,
The Eternal Lord —
Almighty Ruler!

THREE more of the lines are used for the periphrasis of the first making the world:

He established the beginning; He first shaped— He afterwards madeBOOK THREE more lines are employed to express the earth as often by a periphrasis:

The earth for the children of men —
The middle region —
The ground for men —

So that of eighteen lines, the periphrasis occupies fourteen, and in so many lines only conveys three ideas; and all that the eighteen lines express is simply the first verse of the book of Genesis, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

No Saxon poem can be inspected without the periphrasis being found to be the leading characteristic. The elegant Menology in the Cotton Library displays it in its very beginning. The rythm in the placing of the syllables is also apparent:

Cpirt pær acennyb Cyninga pulbop On mibne pintep: Mæpe theoben! Ece ælmihtig! On thy eahteothan bæg hælenb gehaten Deoron nicer peanb. Christ was born
the King of Glory
in mid-winter:
Illustrious King!
Eternal! almighty!
On the eighth day
he was called the Saviour,
Ruler of heaven's kingdom.

As all the specimens of their native poetry which will be adduced in this chapter will be found to abound with periphrastical amplifications, it will be unnecessary to introduce more instances here.

Their Metaphors. THEIR periphrasis is always mingled with metaphors; and as these will be seen very frequently in the subsequent citations, they need

not be particularised. One striking instance CHAP. will suffice, which we will take from Cedmon's periphrasis and metaphors to express the ark; he calls it successively, the ship, the sea-house, the greatest of watery chambers, the ark, the great sea-house, the high mansion, the holy wood, the house, the great sea-chest, the greatest of treasure-houses, the vehicle, the mansion, the house of the deep, the palace of the ocean, the cave, the wooden fortress, the floor of the waves, the receptacle of Noah, the moving roof, the feasting-house, the bosom of the vessel, the nailed building, the ark of Noah, the vehicle of the ark, the happiest mansion, the building of the waves, the foaming ship, the happy receptacle.

ANOTHER prevailing feature of the Anglo- Their Saxon poetry was the omission of the little of Parparticles of speech, those abbreviations of lan-ticles. guage which are the invention of man in the more cultivated ages of society, and which contribute to express our meaning more discriminatingly, and to make it more clearly understood. The prose and poetry of Alfred's translation of Boethius will enable us to illustrate this remark. Where the prose says, Thee the on tham ecan retle picrart, "Thou who on the eternal seat reignest," the poetry of the same passage, Thee on heahretle ecan picrart, ".Thou on high seat eternal reignest," omitting the explaining and connecting particles, the, and than. So, "Thou that on the seat," is

BOOK IX.

again in the poetry, "Thou on seat." The Saxon of the little fragment of Cedmon is without particles.

WHOEVER looks into Anglo-Saxon poetry after being familiar with their prose, will perceive how uniformly barren their poems are of the discriminating and explanatory particles. He will likewise feel, in the difficulties which attend his construction of it, how much obscurity is created by their absence.

Their short Phrases.

In prose, and in cultivated poetry, every conception of the author is clearly expressed and fully made out. In barbaric poetry, and in the Anglo-Saxon poetry, we have most commonly abrupt, imperfect hints, instead of regular description or narration. The poetical citations which follow will abundantly show this. But that their poetry seeks to express the same idea in fewer words than prose, may be made apparent by one instance. Thus, the phrase in Alfred's prose, "So doth the moon with his pale light, that the bright stars he obscures in the heavens," is put by him in his poetry thus:

With pale light Bright stars Moon lesseneth.

Even when the same idea is multiplied by the periphrasis, the rest of the sentence is not extended either in meaning or expression. One word or epithet is played upon by a repetition of synonimous expressions, but the meaning of the sentence is not thereby increased.

Or their artificial inversion of their words and CHAP. phrases in their poems, every specimen adduced will give evidence. It is quite different in their Their Inprose. The words follow there most commonly versions and Tranin an easy and natural order. The poem on Beowulf will give repeated instances of their abrupt and unconnected transitions. Their metre will be the subject of a separate chapter.

THE poetry which pleases a refined age, has no more similarity to such poetry as we find to have been popular among the Anglo-Saxons, than the sonatas of Haydn, Mozart, or Beethoven, can be supposed to have to the boisterous music of our ancestors. Poetry, like painting and architecture, has attained to its perfection by slow degrees. The leaves of its laurel seem to have been the gradual contributions of genius and labour during many centuries. But at the period in which it is the province of this history to contemplate it, little else seems to have been done than the formation of a style of composition different from prose. If we call this style poetry, it is rather by complaisance than truth - rather with a knowledge of the excellences afterwards introduced into it, than of those which it then possessed.

THE barren and peculiar state of the Anglo-Saxon poetry leads us to infer, that it was the product of art more than of nature. Its origin seems to have been as homely as its genius.

THE origin of the periphrasis is easily accounted for; a favourite chief or hero conquers, rejoicings of his people. One calls him brave; another, fierce; another, irresistible. He is pleased with the praises; and some one at his feast, full of the popular feeling, repeats the various epithets with which he had been greeted:

Edmund, the brave chief, fierce in war! irresistible in battle! slaughtered his enemies

This is in substance an Anglo-Saxon poem.

But when these addresses were found to interest the vanity of the chiefs, and to excite their liberality, more labour would be bestowed in the construction of the periphrasis; the compliment would be sometimes higher seasoned, and then the periphrasis would be raised into occasional metaphors: the hero would be called, the eagle of battle, the lord of shields, the giver of the bracelet, the helmet of his people; and the lady would be saluted as a beautiful elf.

The style of the Anglo-Saxon poetry seems to have been originally the common, imperfect language of the people, in its half-formed and barbarous state. When an infant first begins to talk, it uses only the nouns and pronouns of its language. By degrees it learns the use of a few verbs, which for some time it uses in their simplest forms, without any of their conjugations. The meaning of these is supplied by

its actions, or is left to be guessed by its parent. CHAP. The knowledge of the abbreviations, or the particles of language, is gradually attained. With our careful education, children acquire from us the habit of using them with fluency and correctness in a few years. But wild nations must have been some centuries without them.

ALL nations, who have formed their languages, have gone through the same process, in doing so, that our children are always exhibiting. The nouns, or the names of things, are at first their only language. Some of these, which signify visible action or motion, come at last to be used to express motion or action generally, or are added to other nouns, to express them in a state of action. These are what we now call verbs. Hence nouns, nouns used as verbs, or thus converted into verbs, and others made pronouns, compose the whole of the language in the ruder ages of every uncivilised nation.

As the progress of society goes on, the abbreviations of language begin to be formed; words multiply, and the forms of using them to distinguish the various ideas of the human mind from each other, and to give determination and precision to its meaning, begin also to multiply. The conjugations of the verbs, and the declensions of nouns, are then invented, new sets of nouns receive being, and new meanings are given to the primitive nouns, as will be shown in our chapter on language, till at length every



BOOK language receives that multiplicity of terms and IX. particles which form the copious and clear stream of expressive and cultivated prose. If a people narrate a tale in the full and copious period of their language, they will do it naturally in that easy and loquacious prose which forms the style of Herodotus, the oldest prose writer of Greece that has survived to us. But if the same tale was told by the ancestors of this people in their ruder state, when language had not acquired its abbreviations, nor the verbs their conjugations, nor the nouns their secondary meanings and derivative applications; and if that tale, so rudely told, were handed down faithfully by tradition in its rude state to the cultivated age, it would probably exhibit all the features of the Anglo-Saxon poetry; -it would be without particles, without conjugations or declensions, with great contraction of phrase, with abrupt transitions, with violent metaphor and frequent periphrasis. The contraction of phrase would arise from the penury of their associations. The same poverty of mind and knowledge would make the periphrasis, or the retracing the same idea again and again, their easiest source of eloquence; and the violence of metaphor naturally arises from not having immediately new terms to express the new, or more intellectual ideas, that would every year be rising among an improving people; and therefore, till new words are devised, the old names of real things are necessarily, though violently applied.

THE metre of the Saxon poetry is the simplest CHAP. that can be conceived, and is, indeed, often little else than a series of short exclamations. Its inversions are more artificial. But when music was applied to poetry, and men found it beneficial to sing or recite a chieftain's praise, we may conceive, that, to secure to themselves the profits of the profession, some little ingenuity was exerted to make difficulties which would raise their style above the vulgar phrase. Its inversion was one of the easiest modes of making a peculiar style of composition; and as society advanced in its attainments, the transition, the alliteration, and other ornaments, may have been added, either as new beauties or as new difficulties.

When the style of the nation had been improved into an easy and accurate prose, the ancient style may have been kept on foot by the bards of the chiefs from design, and by the people from habit and veneration. The old style would be long remembered by a nation, from respect to its ancestors, from that venerable air which it has from its antiquity, like the dialect and stanza of Spenser to us, which is always pleasing, and often imitated; and from the fact, that the ancient compositions which had become popular were in the ancient style.

Hence, independent of the interest which the bards would have to use the ancient style, because, by becoming more unlike the improving language of the improving people, it would re-

BOOK main more securely appropriated to them, and therefore more beneficial; the people, from habit and association, would also prefer it.

> Thus humbly, it is conceived, the Anglo-Saxon poetry arose: at first the rude exclamations of a rude people, with a rude language, greeting their chieftains; soon repeated or imitated by some men, from the profit derived from it. When, from the improvement of the manners and state of the people, a more cultivated style, or that we call prose, became general, because better fitted to the uses of life, then the old rude style dropped out of common use. The bards, however, retained and appropriated this, because more instrumental to their professional advantages. To enjoy these more exclusively, to secure their monopoly of credit and gifts, they added more difficulties to the style they adopted, to make it more remote from the vulgar attainment; till at length their poetical style became for ever separated from prose.

In thus considering our ancient poetry as an artificial and mechanical thing, cultivated by men chiefly as a trade, we must not be considered as confounding it with those delightful beauties which we now call poetry. These have arisen from a different source, and are of a much later chronology. They are the creations of subsequent genius; but they have sprung up, not in its dark and ancient days, but in a succession of better times, during the many ages which followed, in which the general intellect

of society being continually improving, taste CHAP. and imagination improved also. The English fancy was cultivated with assiduous labour for many centuries before Chaucer arose, or could have arisen. True poetry is the offspring of cultivated mind. Art cannot produce it without nature, but neither can nature make it where art is wholly unknown. Hence, all that we owe to our Anglo-Saxon ancestors in poetry is, that, by accident or design, they perpetuated a style of composition different from the common language of the country, which gradually became appropriated to fancy and music. In happier times, genius, using it as the vehicle of its effusions, improved it by slow degrees, and enriched it with ever-succeeding beauties; till that rich stock of poetry has been created, which is the pride of our literature and country.

THE Anglo-Saxon poetry, as it is earlier, so it is also inferior to the Northern in depth of feeling; in vigour of genius, and in culture of imagination. It occupies a middle space between the ancient British poetry and the Northern. It has not the story, nor the strong imagination of the Northern.

It exhibits chiefly feeling, but it is vague feeling, or feeling vaguely expressed, not made out, not communicated by expressions or images adapted to excite it in others. It is strong heroic feeling in the mind of the writer, but more expressed by violent words than by the real effusion or detail of the genuine emotion.

BOOK Bur, in truth, society had then not acquired a phrase of eloquent passion for its own use. It felt often strongly; but, like the uncultivated mind of all ages, did not know how to express itself. Hence the use, and the cause of the use of oaths and imprecations, violent gesticulations and abuse. The strong feeling is expressed by them because the utterers have not yet attained the art or the habit of using any other form of diction to express their feelings by, and know no other way of giving them utterance.

> ALFRED, by translating the poetry of Boethius, did more to improve Saxon poetry than any other thing, but this kind was too intellectual to be then imitated by his uneducated contemporaries. He would have done them more service if he had translated Virgil or Homer, or any other epic poem into Saxon. The story would have caught their attention, and the descriptions and dialogues have been more level to their comprehension. The warlike story of Homer would have suited them; but Homer was out of the reach of Alfred, and perhaps Virgil's Eneid might have been too refined and sentimental.

> THE history of the Saxon poetry, and, indeed, of all modern European poetry, in its ruder state, may be divided into three heads: songs, or ballads; the lengthened narrative poems, or romances; and that miscellaneous kind which, if we term it lyric, it is more for the convenience of using a short generic word,

than for the exact appropriation of its meaning. CHAP. Under these three divisions shall be arranged all that can be collected on the Saxon poetry.



That our ancestors had popular songs on the The Saxon actions of their great or favourite characters, or on such other subjects as interested the vulgar mind, is proved by many instances, which may be traced in the ancient writers. Aldhelm. whose Latin poetry will be noticed, applied himself to compose songs, or ballads, in the Anglo-Saxon language, to instruct, as well as to amuse, his countrymen. Alfred inserted it as a remark in his Manual, that no one had ever appeared before Aldhelm so competent in English poetry; none had been able to compose so much, or to sing and recite it so appositely. The king mentions a popular ballad of Aldhelm's, which was in his time (that is, nearly two centuries afterwards) sung in the streets. Malmsbury adds, that Aldhelm, anxious to ipstruct his countrymen, then semi-barbarous, and inattentive to their religious duties, took his station on the public bridge, as if a singer by profession, and, by mixing sacred with lighter topics, won their attention, and meliorated their minds.

None of Aldhelm's vernacular poetry has survived; but the circumstance above mentioned, that he composed and sang these ballads as if "he professed the art of singing 3," show

³ Malmsb. 3 Gale, 339.

BOOK that the harpers of the day were accustomed to recite them. That such things were then in general circulation is also implied by Bede, when he mentions, that in a festive company the harp was sent round, that those might sing who could. 4

> It was a book of Saxon poems which first allured Alfred to learn to read 5; and the fact, that he had his children taught to read Saxon poems 6, and that he himself visited the Danish camp as a harper 7, which, in the reign of his grandson, Anlaf imitated 8, prove the existence of popular songs, which interested both the child and the rude warrior.

> THESE songs, or ballads, are also mentioned on other occasions. When Malmsbury, after narrating the reign of Athelstan, proceeds to describe his origin from Edward's amour with a shepherd's daughter, he says, "The following facts I have taken rather from the songs (cantilenis) worn out by the course of time, than from books composed for the instruction of posterity."9

> WHEN Malmsbury has to mention the adulteries of Edgar, he endeavours to lessen their historical authority by saying, "The other infamies which I shall mention have been rather diffused by songs" (cantilenæ). 10

> These popular songs occur to us again in the ancient life of Dunstan. He is there said to

⁵ Asser. 4 Bede, lib. iv. c. 24.

⁷ Malmsb. 43. • Ibid. 48. 9 Ibid. 52.

[&]quot; Ibid. 56.

have learnt "the vain songs of his "nation." CHAP. He was also at that time a player upon the harp.

A FRAGMENT of a ballad composed by Canute the Great has survived to us 12, which gives us a specimen of the measure which this kind of poetry had attained in his time. As he was sailing by the abbey in the isle of Ely, he heard the monks chanting their psalms and anthems, and was so struck with the interesting melody, that he composed a little Saxon ballad on the occasion, which began thus:

Cepie runzen de munecher binnen Elý, Tha Linux ching peudep bý; Roped, Linixer, noep de land, And hepe pe der munecher rang.

Merry sang the monks in Ely, When Canute the king was sailing by; "Row, ye Knights, near the land, "And let us hear these monks' song."

The historical ballads of the Saxons on the actions of their popular favourites are also intimated by Ingulf, the Conqueror's secretary. In his account of the chivalric hero, Hereward, who flourished in the time of Edward the Confessor and afterwards, he says, "His brave actions were sung in England." In another passage, the monk informs us that Hereward died at last in peace, and was buried in their monastery, "after great battles, and a thousand

¹³ MS. Cleop. B. 13.

²⁴ Hist. Elien. - 3 Gale, 505.

¹³ Ingulf, p. 67.

BOOK dangers, frequently dared against the king, earls, barons, and magistrates, and bravely achieved, as is yet sung in the streets." 14 We may close our authorities by stating, that William of Malmsbury mentions, that the song (cantilena) of Roland was began to be sung before the battle of Hastings, to excite a martial spirit in the combatants. 15

> Two of the historical songs of our ancestors, and some fragments of others, have been preserved in the Saxon Chronicle, in which they have been inserted as part of the Chronicle. As one of the songs on Edgar's death has not been hitherto brought before the English public. and the other, on Ethelstan's victory, has been given with an incorrect translation, I will add a version of both.

> > The Song on Ethelstan's Victory at Brunanburh.

Here Athelstan king, of earls the lord, the giver of the bracelets of the nobles. and his brother also. Edmund the ætheling, the Elder! a lasting glory won by slaughter in battle with the edges of swords at Brunan burh. The wall of shields they cleaved. they hewed the noble banthe survivors of the family,

the children of Edward. As to them it was natural from their ancestry, that they in the field often against every enemy their land should defend. their treasures and homes.

Pursuing, they destroyed the Scottish people and the ship-fleet. The dead fell! the field resounded! the warriors sweat! After that the sun rose in the morning hour,

¹⁴ Ingulf, p. 68.

¹⁵ Malmsb. p. 101.

the greatest star! glad above the earth, God's candle bright! the eternal Lord's! till the noble creature hastened to her setting.

There lay soldiers many with darts struck down, Northern men, over their shields shot. So were the Scotch; weary of ruddy battle.

The West Saxons then
throughout the day,
with a chosen band,
to the last pressed
on the loathed people.
They hewed the fugitives of
the army,

the army, the behind ones, fiercely with swords sharpened at the mill.

The Mercians did not refuse

the hard hand-play with any of those men that, with Anlaf, over the turbid sea, in the bosom of the ship, sought the land for deadly fight.

Five lay
in that battle place,
young kings,
by swords quieted:
so also seven,
the earls of Anlaf,
and innumerable of the army
of the fleet—and the Scots.

There was chased away the lord of the Northmen, driven by necessity
to the voice of the ship.
With a small host,
with the crew of his ship,
the king of the fleet
departed out on the yellow
flood;

his life preserved.

So there also the routed one, a fugitive, came to his northern country; Constantinus: the hoarse din of Hilda he needed not to vociferate in the commerce of swords, he was the fragment of his

relations;
of his friends felled in the
folk-place,

slain in the battle:
And his son he left
on the place of slaughter
with wounds beaten down.
Young in the conflict,
he would not boast;
the lad with flaxen hair,
from the bill of death,
tho' old in wit.

Nor more then Anlaf,
with the residue of their
armies
had need to exult,
that they for works of battle
were better
in the place of combat,
in the prostration of the ban-

in the meeting of the arrows, in the assembly of men, in the exchange of weapons, CHAP

BOOK when they on the field of IX. slaughter against Edward's

against Edward's descendants played.

Departed from them, then the Northmen, in nailed ships, the dreary relics of the darts, on the stormy sea, over the deep water, sought Dublin, and their land, disgraced in mind.

So the brothers both together, the king and the ætheling, their country sought, the West-Saxon land.

The screamers of war they left behind, the raven to enjoy, the dismal kite, and the black raven with horned beak: and the hoarse toad; the eagle, afterwards to feast on the white flesh; the greedy battle-hawk, and the grey beast, the wolf in the wood.

Norhad there been a greater slaughter in this island ever vet of people destroyed, before this by the edges of swords, (This is what the books tell us of the old wise men) since from the East hither the Angles and the Saxons came up over the broad waves, and sought the Britons. The illustrious smiths of war! the Welsh, they overcame: the earls excelling in honor! and obtained the country.

In this song we may observe this artless order: in the two first paragraphs, the actions of Athelstan and his brother are recited. The West Saxons and the Mercians are then separately praised. The fate of their enemies follows. The deaths of the five kings and seven earls are commemorated. Anlaf's flight and escape are sung, and Constantine's, whose son fell in the conflict. The poet then exults in the superior prowess of his countrymen. He conducts the remains of the defeated army to Dublin, and the victorious princes into West Saxony. He closes his song with two poetical

common-places; one on the birds of prey, who CHAP. crowd the field of battle, and the other on the superiority of this victory to all former ones.

THE song on Edgar's death is much shorter:

Here ended
his earthly joys —
Edgar, England's king:
he chose for himself another
light.

beautiful and pleasant; and left this feeble life, which the children of the nations,

the men on earth,
call so transitory.
On that month which every
where

in this country's soil
they, that were before
in the art of numbers
rightly instructed,
'call July;
in his youth departed
on the eighteenth day,
Edgar from life —
the giver of the bracelets of

the nobles:
and his son took
afterwards to the kingdom;
a child not full grown;
the ruler of earls;
Edward was his name,
an excelling hero.

Ten nights before from Britain departed the bishop so good in native mind, Cyneward was his name. Then was in Mercia, to my knowledge, wide and every where the praise of the Supreme

Governor
destroyed on the earth.
Many were disturbed
of God's skilful servants.
Then was much groaning
to those that in their breasts
carried the burning love
of their Creator in their mind.
Then was the source of mi-

racies
so much despised,
the Governor of victory;
the Lawgiver of the sky;
when man broke his rights.

And then was also driven the beloved man,
Oslac, from the earth,
over the rolling of the waves,
over the bath of the sea-fowl,
the long-haired hero,
wise, and in words discreet,
over the roaring of the waters,
over the country of the
whales;

of an home deprived.

And then was shown up in the sky a star in the firmament. This the firm of spirit, the men of skilful mind, call extensively a comet by name, воок

men skilled in art, wise truth-tellers.

There was over the nation thevengeance of the Supreme. Widely spread hunger over the mountains. That again Heaven's Ruler removed; the Lord of angels! He again gave bliss to every inhabitant by the earth's fertility.

THESE historical songs have none of the story, nor the striking traits of description which interest us in the ballads of a subsequent age. In the Saxon songs we see poetry in its rudest form, before the art of narration was understood. The simplicity of the ballad deceives us into a belief that it is the easy and natural performance of the less cultivated ages of society. But the truth seems to be, that the excellence of the ballad is as difficult of attainment as any other species of approved poetry, and is the result not merely of genius, but also of great cultivation. In the ruder ages of nations, the ballad is the sort of poetry the most frequently composed and the most generally recited. The incessant cultivation of this particular species creates at least an excellence in it which subsequent ages do not attain, because other departments of the Parnassian art are then attended to, and the ballad becomes less used.

The song of Canute on Ely was the composition of the eleventh century; and being much later written than that on Athèlstan, and therefore of a more cultivated kind, seems to have approached nearer that lively and dramatic form which interests us so much in the ballads

of the following ages. This little fragment is, CHAP. indeed, the oldest specimen of the dramatic or genuine ballad which we have in the Anglo-Saxon language.

THE genuine ballad seems to have originated when the old Saxon poetry began to decline. The laboured metaphor, the endless periphrasis, the violent inversion, and the abrupt transition, being the great features of the Saxon poetry; these constituted that pompousness which William of Malmsbury truly states to have been its great characteristic. But it was impossible that while these continued prevalent and popular, the genuine ballad could have appeared. The ballad, therefore, probably arose from more vulgar and homely poets - from men who could not bend language into that difficult and artificial strain which the genius of the Anglo-Saxon bard was educated to use. The ambulatory glee-men who strove to please the public by their merry-andrew antics, were most probably the first inventors of the genuine ballad. While at one time they tumbled and danced, showed their bears, and frolicked before the people in the dresses of various animals, at others they may have told little tales to interest the mob, from whose liberality they drew their maintenance.

INCIDENTS narrated in verse were more intelligible than the pompous songs of the regular poets, and far more interesting to the people. In time they gained admission to the hall and

BOOK the palace; and, by the style of Canute's ballad, this revolution must have been achieved by the beginning of the eleventh century. Then the harsh and obscure style of the old Saxon poetry began to be unpopular; and being still more discredited after the Norman conquest, it was at length completely superseded by the ballad and the metrical romance.

CHAP. II.

Anglo-Saxon Narrative Poems, or Romances.—
The Poem on Beowulf.

THE origin of the metrical romance has been lately an interesting subject of literary research; and as it has not been yet completely elucidated, it seems proper to enquire whether any light can be thrown upon it from the ancient Saxon poetry.

CHAP.

It was asserted by Mr. Ritson, in conformity with the prevailing opinion of antiquaries, that the Anglo-Saxons had no poetical romance in their native tongue. But he grounds this opinion on the fact, that no romance had been at that time discovered in Saxon but a prose translation from the Latin of the legend of Apollonius of Tyre. The Anglo-Saxon poem on Beowulf, which was particularly recommended to the notice of the public in the first edition of this history in the year 1805, proves that this opinion was erroneous.

This work is a poem on the actions of its hero Beowulf. If it describes those deeds only which he actually performed, it would claim the title of an historical poem; but if, as few can

BOOK doubt, the Anglo-Saxon poet has amused himself with pourtraying the warrior, and incidents of his fancy, then it is a specimen of an Anglo-Saxon poetical romance, true in costume and manners, but with an invented story. It is the most interesting relic of the Anglo-Saxon poetry which time has spared to us; and, as a picture of the manners, and as an exhibition of the feelings and notions of those days, it is as valuable as it is ancient. There is only one MS. of it now existing, which is in the Cotton Library, Vitellius, A. 15.; and our antiquarian patriotism may be blamed that, when so much labour and money have been applied to print, at the public expence, so many ancient remains, and some of such little utility, we should have left this curious relic of our ancestors to have been first printed by a foreigner, and in a foreign country.2

- ¹ Under the commission for printing the public records of the kingdom much has been printed which deserves the thanks of the community; but I should have rejoiced to have seen the Anglo-Saxon remains substituted for some of the volumes which have perhaps never been twice opened since their publication, and will never be molested even by antiquaries again. Would not a more enlarged principle of selection have been more advantageous to our most valuable MSS.?
- ² Ten years after the first edition of this part of the Anglo-Saxon history, Dr. G. J. Thorkelin, in the year 1815, printed this work at Copenhagen, which he addressed to the Lord John de Bulow, as his Mæcenas optime! by whose private munificence, he says, he had been enabled to bring into his country a monument of literature which was above a thousand years old. But he is not entitled to claim it as a Danish poem; it is pure Anglo-Saxon; and though I grant that the Anglo-Saxon language is very like that of the old

THE MS. of this poem was injured by the CHAP. fire in the British Museum in 1731. It seems to have been written in the tenth ³ century. Its author, in several places, speaks as if he had been a contemporary of the events he describes; but this may be considered as a poetical license, especially if it be historically true that Beowulf fell in Jutland in the year 340. ⁴ The following analysis of the poem will give the reader of this history a general notion of its contents, and the extracts will be selected with a view to show the manners it describes.

It opens with an exclamatory introduction of his hero, but without immediately naming him:—

How have we of the Gar-Danes ⁵, in former days, of the Theod-kings ⁶, the glory heard? How the ethelings

excelled in strength!

Oft the scyld-scefing from hosts of enemies, from many tribes, the mead-seats withdrew.

The earl was dreaded—

Icelandic poetry which has survived, yet it is a similarity with great idiomatical and verbal differences. It is by no means identity.

3 So the late Mr. Astle thought, and the writing has all the appearance of being of that age.

⁴ Dr. Thorkelin mentions this on the authority of Suhn, in his Geschichte der Danen. I can neither deny nor confirm the chronology.

Thorkelin calls these the Northern Danes, inhabiting Zealand and the other isles, p. 261. His derivation of Gar from Aur, a peninsula in Iceland, is unsatisfactory. I would rather deduce it from the Saxon, as implying the ancient Danes; as eald Saxons, the old Saxons.

⁶ Of these see vol. i. of this history, p. 447.

BOOK he grew up under the heavens;
he flourished in honours

of those sitting about the path of the whole should obey him; should pay him tribute.

His birth and encomium follow: -

There was a good king:
to him offspring
was afterwards born,
a youth in the world:
this one God sent
the people to comfort
because he understood their
need.

which the Supreme knew that they had before a long while suffered. To him the Lord of life, the Ruler of glory, the world's honours gave.

HE proceeds to name his hero, and to represent him as announcing and preparing for a warlike or predatory adventure:—

BEOWULF was illustrious. Wide sprang the rumour that the offspring of the scyld would rush upon some lands. So would he be able good vessels to obtain, with abundant money-gifts, in seasonable time.

Then with him, as formerly, again associated his voluntary companions. When the battle was coming the people followed him. With deeds of praise every where among the tribes this man shall flourish.

8 Thorkelin's Beowulf, p.4.

⁷ Thorkelin's first translation of this poem was burnt in our bombardment of Copenhagen. At the request of his patron, Bulow, he made another translation in Latin, which he has published. As I very often differ with him in the construction of the original, I have attempted to convey the ideas of the poet in a version of my own, in the passages inserted in this work. Yet, as a first translation of a very difficult composition, I ascribe great merit to Dr. Thorkelin for that which he has published; and cordially thank him for the courage and ingenuity of his undertaking.

⁹ Ibid. p. 4, 5. On collating the Doctor's printed text with the MS. I have commonly found an inaccuracy of copying in every page; but for a first publisher he has been, on the whole, unusually correct.

THE description of their embarkation is then CHAP. given: —

With them the scyld departed to the ship, while many were eager to proceed with their lord. They conducted him forth to the journey of the ocean, his dear companions as he commanded, when with words he governed the friendly scyldingi, the loved land-chieftain had long possessed them.

There at the port he stood:

the voice rung on the ice and out, ready was the etheling's expedition.

They led then
the dear king,
the lord of bracelets,
the illustrious one,
into the bosom of the ship.
By the mast there was
of many vessels
from distant waves
the ornaments collected.10

The poet then indulges himself in describing the war-ship and its contents:—

I have never heard that a more king-like ship has been prepared. With the weapons of Hilda, and noble garments, and bills and mails. In its bosom lay many vessels, that with them should far depart on the territory of the flood. Nor did they place in it few presents from the people's wealth; this they did who at its first formation

alone over the waves, a spacious vessel.

Then they fixed in it the flowing banner high over their heads. They let the waters bear it, the tide, into the ocean.

To him would be a soul of sorrow;
a mourning mind:
men would not be able
to say, in truth,
that any warrior under
heaven
would have a happy state
who from them would take
its lading.**

THE poet then introduces to us a character who makes also a principal figure in his work:

sent it forth,

²³ Ibid. p. 6.

BOOK this is Hrothgar, one of the sons of Halfden, a Danish king, to whose dignity Hrothgar had succeeded: -

> Then was to Hrothgar the army-treasure given, the worship of battle. Then him, his dear relations

diligently obeyed, while the youth grew up the great lord of his kins

THE author now advances to the incident on which the main part of the poem turns, but which is narrated with considerable obscurity. The first incident is, that Hrothgar summons his warriors to one of those great meetings which it was customary with all the Teutonic kings to hold, which with the Anglo-Saxons was the time when their witena-gemot met, and when the sovereigns distributed their presents, as we have already mentioned.13

It occurred to his mind that to the hall of his palace he would summon his heroes. Men hastened much mead to prepare. This the chiefs of men always enquired for.

And within that place he purposed to share every thing with young and old, except his territory and the lives of his men. 14

The meeting was proclaimed, and the assembly collected. The name given to the royal mansion, or town, was Heort: -

When it was all ready the great hall-chamber, the poet called it Heort, he that of his words had extensive power.

The king was not menacing;

he laid out the bracelets; he divided the treasure: at the feast the lofty hall resounded with shouts. and with the crooked horn. "5

¹³ Beowulf, p. 7.

Beowulf, p. 8.

¹³ See before, p. 227. 244.

²⁵ Ibid. p. 8, 9.

An enemy is now abruptly noticed as watching CHAP. this festivity with dark and secret purposes of malignity:—

He that abode in darkness, while he every day heard their joy loud in the hall. 16

The author continues his description of their festivity, and introduces the curious circumstance of a scop or poet singing a poem on the origin of things, like Jopas, at Carthage, before Dido and Æneas:—

There was on the harp the sweet sound sung, the poet's narration; he that knew, the origin of men, though remote to describe. 17

He sang, that the ALMIGHTY
created the earth;
its bright, beauteous plains.
So the water-beds
he bendeth.

He established the path of the fierce sun, and the moon's light, to illuminate the inhabitants of the earth. He has also adorned the regions of the world with leaves and splendor. He has also made life for every species of those that move alive. 18

The poet of the feast is represented as continuing his song to notice the evil beings that disturb both heaven and earth; and the murder of Abel, an idea of some ingenuity in the author, as it leads on to a scene of blood, which occa-

²⁶ Beowulf, p. 9.

¹⁷ At this part of the latter MS. is a leaf inserted out of its place, which completely confuses all just comprehension of the poem. Dr. Thorkelin remarked the interpolation, and has restored it to its proper place.

²⁸ Beowulf, p. 9, 10.

BOOK sions the principal events of his work, and which he ascribes to a malignant being whom he now and afterward calls Grendel:

> Thus the Lord made mankind. and they lived happily in joy, till that one began to perpetrate crimes, the enemy in hell.

> There was a more grim spirit called GRENDEL. Great was the mark of his steps. he, that ruled the moors,

the fen, and the fastness of the Fifel race.

Unhappy on the earth, man resided awhile. after the Creator had cast him off.

On Cain's offspring,

the Eternal Lord avenged his murder. His, who slew Abel. He had no joy from that homicide: but him afar the Creator punished for this crime to mankind.

From thence sprang all the pernicious ones. The Eotenas, and the Ylfe, and the Orcneas; such giants as fought against God for a long time, till he retaliated on them his retribution. 19

THE author now represents the festive assembly as retiring to their rest; and, while they were all sleeping secure and unsuspicious, this malignant enemy, or evil spirit, surprizes them, and kills, in their repose, thirty thegas: -

He departed to observe, after night had come on, how in the lofty mansion, the warlike Danes were residing.

after the quaffing of the beer.

He found there within the assembly of the ethelings sleeping after the feast, knowing no sorrow. This won-sceaft of men,

this creature unhealthful. grim and greedy, soon was ready, reeking and fierce, and he took away in their rest

thirty thegas.

Then again he departed, satisfied with plunder, to return home, from that slaughter. 30

²⁹ Beowulf, p. 10, 11.

This unexpected disaster became known in the morning, and excited both grief and indignation. The king, Hrothgar, was reproached for it, either from suspicion, or because he had not prevented it, or was unable to avenge it. For twelve winters the dissatisfaction of his people and his own vexation continued, and the foehthe or homicide was still unpunished. It was in this state of things that Beowulf, hearing of "the deeds of the Grendel," undertook his expedition for the purpose of aiding Hrothgar, finding out Grendel, and inflicting vengeance for his midnight murders.

Beowulf is described sometimes as a princely chief, and sometimes as the thegn, the hearthgeneat, and the beod-geneat of a king named Higelac. He is also styled lord of the scyldingi. His father was Ecgtheow, and his people are called Geata or Jutes. ²¹ He is thus represented as resolving on his enterprise:—

He said, "The battle-king over the road of the swans will seek the great sovereign, as he has need of men.

This expedition, for him, prudent Ceorles shall soon provide." 25

His companions assemble at his request, and

Sought the wood of the sea, the warrior directed the sea-skilled men to the boundary of the shore.

The vessel was under the rock,

the heroes ready, at his voice went down; they waded thro' the streams of the sea: on the sands the warriors bore into the empty bosom

³¹ Beowulf, p. 17. 22. 28, 29, 30.

³⁴ Ibid, p. 18.

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the bright ornaments, the instruments of battle, of the Jute-like men. The adventurers drew out, for their voluntary journey, the well-bound timber. 23

Their voyage is then stated. Their sailing is described to be like the fanning of the neck of a fowl, till

They saw land; the cliffs of the ocean; the shining hills; the steep wide promontories: there their voyage ended.

Their debarkation follows:

The people of the storm ascended on the plain.

They fastened the wood of the sea; they shook their syrcas;

the garments of battle; they thanked God, that to them the wavejourney had been so easy.²⁴

The poet then exhibits the alarm, vigilance, and enquiries of those who had been appointed to watch the coast:—

Then from the wall,
he that the sea-cliff
should maintain,
beheld the chief of the scyldingi
carrying over the rock
the bright shield
and battle weapons.
Hastily he broke the firevessel,
anxiously weighing in his
mind
who these men could be.
The thegn of Hrothgar
then turn'd

the wood of strength in his hands;
he enquired their intentions by his words.
"What are ye, such a mailed host of weaponed men, that thus the bright keel over the sea-street have led? Come ye hither over the waves to molest the inhabitants? I keep guard here,

that on the land of the Danes

with a ship-army injure

to the shore of battle to ride.

Among his bands he shook

no hostile ones

them." 25

⁸³ Beowulf, p. 19.

²⁴ Ib. 25 Ib. p. 20.

Beowulf advances to answer him; states his CHAP. country and descent, and assures him that he has come on a friendly errand to Hrothgar, and to assist him to procure vengeance on his dreaded enemy.

The Danish warder answers civilly, and sends the tidings of their arrival to his ²⁶ sovereign, while Beowulf's warriors prepared to advance.

The street was of varied stone,
the path was observed by the men together.
Their battle-mail shone by hard hands well locked.

The shining iron rings sung against their weapons, when they to the palace, in their formidable apparel, were delighted to go. 27

But as they were arranging their shields, and displaying their arrows and their ashen shafts, with the grey iron heads, they were interrupted by an opposing band:—

A powerful champion asked them,
"Why do you here carry your lusty shields, grey vestments of war; and grim helms, and this heap of the shafts of battle?

I am Hrothgar's messenger and envoy; I have never seen of foreigners so many valiant-looking men. For a path of revenge, or for glory of mind, do you seek Hrothgar?" 18

Beowulf tells him that his errand is with his Ealdor, if he will permit them to greet him. Wulfgar, "of the Wendel people," who answered him, announces their arrival to Hrothgar, and advises him to be on his guard. But the

²⁶ Beowulf, p. 22-26.

³⁸ Ib. p. 27.

³⁷ Ib. p. 26.

BOOK king declares that he knew him when "a cniht," and orders him to be welcomed and escorted to his palace. 49 Beowulf is then introduced to Hrothgar.

> Beowulf addressed him. The mail shone upon him: the heavy net was linked by the smith's care.

" Thou, Hrothgar! hail! I am the kinsman of Higelac, and a born thegn. Many an enterprise have I begun in my youth; to me the ruler of my native soil this affair of Grendel revealed.

" The sea-sailing ones said that this mansion, once the happiest hall. has been to some warriors deformed and useless. after the light of evening, under the serene sky. had become darkened. My people have taught me

of wise Ceorles. " King Hrothgar, I have sought thee

that they were the happiest

that they may know my strength. -

And now against Grendel,

against that wretched one, I will alone exert myself against that Thyrse.

" Of thee, now, I ask one prayer, bright lord of the Danes, the hedge of the scyldingi! Do not thou deny me, asylum of warriors! dear lord of thy people! as I have thus far come: let me alone. the lord of my eorls and of this sturdy host, expiate Heorot.

" I hear that the wretch madly cares not for weapons; but this I despise, so that Higelac, my lord, may be blithe in his mind. I will bear the sword and the ample shield, my yellow buckler, to the battle.

I will seize the foe with my grasp, and fearless contend with hate against the hate-

full 30

Recollecting, however, with modesty of mind, the adverse chances of battle, Beowulf adds: -

" If death should take me away,

Bear me from the bloody slaughter;

³⁹ Beowulf, p. 28-32.

remember to bury me.

Eat over the solitary wanderer un-mourningly.

Mark my hillock with the simple flower; nor do thou about the fate of my bodily life long sorrow; but send to Higelac, if Hilda should withdraw me

my garments of battle.

The best that my bosom bears,
the richest of my clothes,
the remains of the Hred-lan,
the work of Weland.

Now let fortune
wheel as she may. 31

CHAP.

Hrothgar answers this manly speech in a friendly manner, and ends it with inviting him to "a feast in the hall of mead." Benches are spread "in the beer hall;" the thegn arranges them; the cup-bearer, "laden with ale," distributes it to the band. The scop, or poet, is again introduced, singing peace in Herot 3; but a new character is introduced: Hunferth, "the son of Eglaf, who sat at the feet of the lord of the Scyldingi." He is described as jealous of Beowulf's reputation, and as refusing to any man more celebrity than himself. He is represented as taunting Beowulf on his exploits as a seaking or vikingr.

" Art thou Beowulf,
he that with such profit
labours on the wide sea,
amid the contests of the
ocean?
There you for riches,
and for deceitful glory,
explore its bays
in the deep waters,
till you sleep with your
elders.

Nor can any man restrain you, whether dear or odious to you, from this sorrowful path.

There you rush on the wave; there on the water streams from the miserable you flourish.

You place yourselves in the

sea-street; you oppress with your hands;

³² Beowulf, p. 36.

³² Ib. 37-39.

BOOK you glide over the ocean through the waves of its seas. The fury of winter rages,

yet on the watery domain seven nights have ve toiled."

After other allusions to his exploits, he ends his speech with predicting:

" If thou darest the Grendel, the space of a long night awaits thee," 33

Beowulf answered the son of Ecgtheow: "What' a throng of many words. my friend Hunferth! Drunk with beer, hast thou spoken."

He proceeds to justify himself for attempting the adventure, by a statement of some of his achievements, which is given as an illustration of their habits of life:

We said when a cniht. and we threatened in the life of youth, that out on the ocean. with our elders we would sleep; and we accomplished our

purpose.

Naked were our swords. hard in our hands. when we rushed into the bay, and against the Whale fishes intended to defend ourselves. No creature could float away, far on the waves of the flood

from me. swifter thro' the ocean than I would pursue him. For the space of five nights we were together on the sea, until the flood dispersed us; the raging waves and the coldest sky, the nipping nights and the

north wind:

fierce were the waves. strong and grim their rolling, the rage of the great fishes was excited.

There against the enemies my body's iron vest, by hard hands well locked, gave me complete help. My braided battle-garment lay on my breast, adorned with gold.

The hateful enemy would have dragged me to the ground;

fast he would have had me in his grim gripe, but that it was given to me that I should reach the

wretch with my point. With the battle axe of Hilda, thro' my hands in the noble

onset. I took the mighty sea-deer.34

³³ Beowulf, p. 40, 41.

Beowulf continues to talk of his exploits. The CHAP. conversation is carried on, and the author thus describes the continuation of the banquet, and the appearance of the queen of Hrothgar amid the festivity, and assisting to honor Beowulf:—

There was in the hall
the dispenser of treasure,
the long-haired one, illustrious in battle,
the bright lord of the Danes.

He believed his salutation; he heard from Beowulf, the guardian of his friends, the firmly counselled

thought.

There was from the men the din of laughter resounding;

their words were pleasant.

Waltheow came forth:
the queen of Hrothgar,
mindful of her descent,
circled with gold, she greeted
the warrior in the hall;
and the lordly wife gave the
cup

to the first of the East Danes,

to the noble warder.
She welcomed him blithely,
the one dear to his people,
to that feast of beer.
He glowed with delight,

the illustrious king of victory, at the feast and that hall-cup.

Then the lady went about the helmed nobles and the youths.

A portion to every one of the treasured vessels she gave;

till the opportunity arrived that she, the queen, circled with bracelets, elevated in her mind,

bore the cup of mead to Beowulf.

She greeted the Jute people;

wise with steady words, she thanked God

that he had fulfilled her wish, for she believed the eorl would

be a comforter to his people in any thing.

He took the cup with joy, the warrior of fierces laughter at the wall of the Whales, and then he sung, that the bat-

tle might be hastened.35

The author proceeds to describe the continuation of these courteous civilities, which show us the royal manners of the day:—

³⁵ Beowulf, p. 45-49.

BOOK IX.

Ecgtheow,

"When I launch'd my seaboat on the waves, with the company of my

warriors.

I thought that I alone would fulfil the wish of your people.

And in the deadly conflict, fast with hostile gripe, I will show an eorl-like

strength.

To the end of my day in this mead hall expect me."

These words pleased the wife:

Beowulf spoke, the son of the Jute's expressions of glory.

Encircled with gold, she went.

the queen of the free-like people,

to sit by her lord.

Then, as before in the hall, words of menace were uttered.

The people in the mansion sang the victories of their nation,

till the son of Healfdan suddenly

sought his evening rest. 36

Before he retires, Hrothgar again greets his brave visitor: he then withdraws with his own warriors. The queen "prays the King of Glory against Grendel," and the warder of the hall conducted Beowulf to his place of repose.

Then he took off from him his iron coat of mail, and his helm from his head. He gave his ornamented sword of select iron to his attendant thegn. and bade him keep the instrument of Hilda.

The loved nobleman bent down his cheek, his bolster received the face of the eorl.

and many of the active seawarriors

around him, to happy rest inclined, 37

But while they are in this state of rest and comfort, the poet prepares to change the scene.

came on; the hosts of the shadows roll up.

The spirit of the wan night The shooters sleep - even those that should have held the horn of the palace. 38

The ancient enemy now suddenly returns, to CHAP. take advantage of their security, by a new surprise.

Then came from the moors, amid the mist from the mountains,

the Grendel, bearing the Divine anger.

The hateful foe purposed in his madness

to destroy treacherously some in that high hall.

He knew that the wine palace,

the gilded hall of warriors, had been stored with various vessels.

It was not the first time that he had sought the home of Hrothgar,

but never on former days, or since,

had he attempted braver men than those hall thegns. 39

His fatal measures are thus described: —

Swiftly he passed the mouth of the hall,

and on the joyless floor the fiend trod;

he moved in wrathful mind; he stood with eyes likest to flame,

a frightful light.

He saw in that mansion many warriors sleeping in peace with their lord.

A hand of related heroes.

Then his mind laughed: deformed wretch!

He purposed that he should separate

the life of each from his body.

A feast full of hope shone before him.

The wyrd seemed propitious to him,

that he might prevail over more men that night.

He contemplated with rage the kinsman of Higelac, and how the execrable one might get him under his fierce gripe. 40

He appears to have been under the necessity of attacking first one of the warriors that surrounded Beowulf before he could reach the chief.

³⁹ Ibid. p. 56.

BOOK IX.

He assailed the sleeping war- on the bone of his locks; his club struck the unwary

rior on his upper side; the blood burst from the broken veins. 41

Beowulf awakes as the Grendel is about to destroy him: a fierce contest ensues between them, which is described at some length; and the issue of it is the flight and escape of Grendel without effecting his full purpose. 42 The people assemble in the morning at the place of conflict, surprised at the tidings. Beowulf is highly honoured for his first success. Much rejoicing and conversation ensue upon it. Hrothgar goes and congratulates Beowulf, and declares that he shall consider him as his son. Beowulf in a respectful answer shortly describes the conflict. The jealous son of Eglaf becomes silent, and another splendid banquet is prepared. 43

It was then commanded that the interior of Heort by hands should be adorn'd.

There was then a number of men and women. who the wine-chamber of the great mansion prepared.

There shone, variegated with gold, the web on the walls: many wonders to the sight of each of the warriors that would gaze on it, be-

came visible.44

The king himself proceeded to the festive hall; and the author declares, that he had never heard that a nobler assembly, "about their giver of treasures, the chamber had ever borne." The royal presents to Beowulf are then described: -

44 Ibid. p. 76.

⁴¹ Thorkelin here inserts the misplaced leaf.

⁴² Beowulf, p. 58-64. 43 Ibid. p. 68-75.

They bent towards the tables, to enjoy their full fruit; fair and free they rejoiced; the mead cups abounded; many kinsmen contended with them.

In the lofty hall were Hrothgar and Hrothulf. Heorot was filled with friends within.

No deceitful stafas, (letters or charms)

the people of the scyldingi there framed.

Then to Beowulf he gave the sword of Healfdan; a golden banner, the reward of his victory; an ensign adorned in the hilt;

a helmet and coat of mail; a great sword with decorations;

many saw borne before the hero.

Beowulf fully prospered in the chamber; he needed not be ashamed

of the money-gifts then poured on him. I have not observed

four vessels of gold more liberal, prepared on the table of their CHAP.

meal, II.

to be given to many others of the men.

Around the roof of the helmet,

the castle of the head,
was a hedge firmly circled,
to keep off slaughter,
that no remains of danger
on him.

might the steel hard with scouring inflict,

when against the guilty robber

in fury he should go.

The asylum of corls then commanded

eight mares with fat cheeks, to be drawn into the chamber;

on each of them was stationed

a saddle, varied with trappings richly made.

That was the high king's seat of battle,

when the oblation of swords the son of Healfdan would perform.

Never on the fatal far-famed conflict

would they shrink from the slaughter. 45

Hrothgar gives these presents to Beowulf, and exhorts him to use them manlily. He also gave

⁴⁵ Beowulf, p. 77-79. This description corresponds with the gifts of kings to their nobles and knights, alluded to before.

BOOK IX.

"vases from the treasure of his inheritance, to each of those at that mead table, who followed Beowulf through the paths of the ⁴⁶ ocean." The author moralises shortly, that the Creator governs all men, and that the understanding is the best part of the soul, and that,

Much forethought shall abide in it, both of love and hatred to him that in these days of trouble long enjoys the world.⁴⁷

Hilda,
the mouth greeted the wood;
the lay was oft narrated;
the hall games followed;
the poet of Hrothgar,
behind the table of mead,
recorded the expedition
against the Finns. 48

before Healfdan's leader of

Then were song and music united

This episode is rather long. The enterprise ended in the capture of the king and queen of the Finns. After this,

The song was sung;
the lay of the gleemen.
The games again sprang up.
The music of the table enlivened them,
the cup-bearers distributed
the wine

from wonderful vessels.

Then came forth Waltheow
to go under the golden
crown,
where the two good heroes
sat akin;

peace reigned between them, each with the other in full confidence. 49

The queen is then again exhibited as assisting actively in the friendly assembly; turning to her husband,

Then the lady addresed the scyldinga:
"Take this cup, lord of my

love!

Dispenser of treasure!
In thy hall thou hast been gladdened
with the wine of men;

⁴⁶ Beowulf, p. 80.

⁴⁸ Ibid. p. 81.

⁴⁷ Ibid. p. 81.

⁴⁹ Ibid. p. 88, 89.

CHAP.

and to the Jutes hast spoken with the mild words that should be used.

Be cheerful with the Jutes. mindful of gifts far and near.

"I am told thou hast declared.

thou wouldest have their chief for a son.

Heorot is now expiated; the mansion bright with bracelets.

Enjoy the plentiful mead while thou canst.

and to thy relations leave thy people and thy kingdom. when thou shalt see the metod-sceaft."50

After reminding him that Hrothulf will rule with honour if he survive him, and take care of their offspring, she returns to her seat, where her children and their young friends were near Soon the music is repeated, and taking some valuable ornaments, the queen again rises.

spoke: -

"Accept this bracelet, dear and to these cnyhts Beowulf!

Be it an omen of reward to

And these garments - enjoy their wealth.

Before the assembly she and flourish well with skilful valour:

> be mild in thy counsels. I will be careful of thy re-

After some further commendations, and recommending her sons to his attention, she orders "the drink to be got ready for the noble ones," and returns to her seat. Evening came on, the king withdrew, the tables were taken away, and the place was spread with beds and bolsters.

Some of the beer-servants, speedy and joyful, prepared the chamber of rest. They fixed over their heads the shields of Hilda; the boards of bright wood.

There high over the Etheling on his bench. the helmet of the noble one was seen, his ringed coat of mail, his glorious wood of strength.53

⁵⁰ Beowulf, p. 90.

BOOK They all incline to rest; and in this situation the inveterate enemy attacks them again, but not in person. It is the mother of Grendel that is now the assailant; she enters secretly among the friends of Hrothgar, and kills one of his dearest thegas. Beowulf was not in that part, and the murderess escapes. 53 Hrothgar is much grieved for him, and exclaims: -

> " Dead is Æschere, the son of Yrmenlates: the brother of the elders:

of my run-witan; of my ræd bora."54

Hrothgar goes on to lament the situation of his people, thus exposed to such assaults; ascribes the mischief to Grendel, and gives an account of his habitation. 55 Beowulf in an heroic speech proposes to undertake the enterprise of punishing both the Grendel and his mother for these new fehthes. He collects his own forces and some of Hrothgar's, and prepares for the expedition. 56 His arming himself is described. He takes an old sword of some celebrity that is described, and called Hrunting. He makes a farewell speech to Hrothgar, and requests that, if Hilda, their goddess of war, should take him away, the presents he has received should be sent to Higelac his lord. 57

HE then proceeds to the adventure, and

⁵³ Beowulf, p. 96-100.

⁵⁴ Ibid. 101. These are some of the names given by the Anglo-Saxons to the members of their witena-gemot.

⁵⁵ Ibid. p. 102-104.

⁵⁶ Ibid. p. 105-109.

⁵⁷ Ibid. p. 110-113.

begins it by a combat with the mother of CHAP. Grendel, who attacks him like a sea-wolf. He fights valiantly, but he finds the famous sword of no use. She is not impressible by its edge; her strength and fury begin to overpower him; she throws him down, and is beginning to destroy him, when an enchanted sword, a weapon of the ancient giants, and of their fabrication. comes within his reach: he strikes her with it, and she dies under his blow. 58 This success is followed by a victory over Grendel himself, whom he also destroys, and whose head he carries off and presents to Hrothgar. 59

HE tells the king that he could achieve nothing with Hrunting.

"But the ruler of ages it was often declared, granted me, by the wine-geleasum, that over the waves I should that I should draw this

weapon.60

an ancient sword hang beautiful.

Hrothgar looks at it, and says it was an ancient relic, on which were written the battles of the ancient times, when after the flood the race of the giants were destroyed. On the polished blade, in pure gold, the runæ-letters were marked. 61

THE poem proceeds to describe Beowulf's return to Higelac. He engages in some further adventures, which are not of equal interest with

⁵⁸ Beowulf, p. 114-119.

⁵⁹ Ibid. p. 120-124.

⁶⁰ Ibid. p. 126.

⁶¹ Ibid. p. 127-128.

He succeeds Higelac in his king-BOOK the former. dom; builds a city; fights thirty battles; and dies after a reign of fifty years. 62 Such is the substance of this curious poem, which is quite Anglo-Saxon, in the manners it describes, and corroborates several of those features, which in the preceding pages have been delineated. It seems to be the oldest poem in an epic form, that now exists in any of the vernacular languages of modern Europe.

63 Beowulf, p. 137-236.

CHAP. III.

Anglo-Saxon Poems of Judith and Cædmon.

— Their other Poetry.

THE fragment which remains of the poem CHAP. on Judith, may be deemed another Anglo-Saxon poetical romance. The subject of this poem is taken from the Apocrypha, but the Anglo-Saxon poet has borrowed merely the outline of the story. All the circumstances, the descriptions, and the speeches, which he has inserted, are of his own invention. He has, therefore, done what all the romancers did. He has applied the manners and characters of his day to the time of Judith, and thus really made it an Anglo-Saxon romance.

It is curious, from another circumstance. It is a romance written while the old Anglo-Saxon poetry was in fashion, but when it began to improve: for, while it displays the continuity of narration and minuteness of description, of the more cultivated romance, it retains some metaphors, the periphrasis, and the inversions which our stately ancestors so much favoured. It has only laid aside their abrupt transitions and more violent metaphors.

THE eight first sections of the poem on Judith,

BOOK and part of the ninth, are lost. It begins with a part that corresponds with this verse in the Apocrypha :

" And in the fourth day Holofernes made a feast to his own servants only, and called none of the officers to the banquet."

THE Saxon poet expresses this passage thus: -

Understood I then,
Holofernes ordered
wine to be made diligently,
and with all wonders
a splendid feast to prepare.
To this commanded
the Baldor * of men,
all the eldest thegas.
They with much haste obeyed:

the shielded warriors came
to the rich king;
the leaders of the people.
This was the fourth day
that Judith,
cunning in thought,
the woman shining like an elf,
first sought him.

The subsequent narration of the Apocrypha is not followed by the poet, but instead of it, from his own invention, he substitutes these circumstances:

They then to the feast went to sit, eager to drink wine; all his fierce chiefs, bold, mail-clad warriors! There were often carried the deep bowls behind the benches; so likewise vessels and orcas full to those sitting at supper.

They received him, soon about to die, the illustrious shield-warriors: though of this the powerful

thought not; the fearful lord of earls.

Then was Holofernes exhibitated with wine; in the halls of his guests, he laughed and shouted;

Judith, xii. 10.

² Baldor was one of the sons of Odin. — His name is figuratively used to express a chief.

he roared and dinned;
then might the children of
man
afar off hear
how the stern one
stormed and clamoured,
animated and elated with
wine.

He admonished amply that they should bear it well, to those sitting on the bench.

So was the wicked one over all the day, the lord and his men, drunk with wine, the stern dispenser of wealth; till that they swimming lay over drunk, all his nobility as they were death-slain; their property poured about. So commanded the Baldor of men

to fill to them sitting at the feast,

till that to the children of men the dark night approached. Then commanded he the man so overpowered, the blessed virgin with speed to fetch to his bed rest, with bracelets laden. with rings adorned. Then quickly hurried the subjected servants, as their elder bade them. The mailed warriors of the illustrious lord stepped to the great place. There they found Judith,

prudent in mind; and then firmly, the bannered soldiers began to lead the illustrious virgin to the high tent. There the powerful one his rest on the feast night within was enjoying; the odious Holofernes. There was the fair the golden fly net about the chief's bed hung, that the mischief-ful might look thro'. the Baldor of the soldiers. on every one that there within came of the children of men: and on him no one of man kind: unless the proud one, any man of his illustrious soldiers. commanded to come near him to council.

Then they to the bed brought quickly the prudent woman.
Then went the fierce minded men their lord to tell, that the holy woman was brought into the chamber of his tent.

brought
into the chamber of his tent.
Then was the illustrious one
blithe in mind.
The elder of the cities thought
the bright woman
with filth and pollution to
stain.

CHAP.

воок іх. But the Judge of Glory, the keeper of majesty, would not suffer it; but the Lord, ruler of his nobles, from this thing restrained.

Then departed the devil-worshipping lustful

from the host of men, mischief-full, his bed to visit, where he should suddenly his blood lose within one night.

So, drunken with wine, the rich one fell on the middle of his bed, as he knew no discretion in the inclosure.

The soldiers stepped

out of the chamber
with much haste;
the wine-ful men
that the perfidious
people-hating tyrant
led to the bed
the nighest way.
Then was the glory-ful
maiden of the Saviour
very mindful
how she the foul elder
might easiest destroy,
before the vicious
stainful one awoke.

The maid of the Creator with twisted locks took then a sharp sword, hard with scouring, and from the sheath drew it with her right limb.

The poet then describes her killing Holofernes:

She took the heathen man fast by his hair; she drew him by his limbs towards her disgracefully; and the mischieful odious man at her pleasure laid; so as the wretch she might the easiest well command.

She with the twisted locks struck the hateful enemy, meditating hate, with the red sword, till she had half cut off his neck; so that he lay in a swoon, drunk, and mortally wounded. He was not then dead, not entirely lifeless; she struck then earnest, the woman illustrious in

strength,
another time
the heathen hound;
till that his head
rolled forth upon the floor.
The foul one lay without a
coffer;

backward his spirit turned under the abyss, and there was plunged below, with sulphur fastened; for ever afterwards wounded

by worms.
Bound in torments,
hard imprisoned,
in hell he burns.
After his course,
he need not hope,

with darkness overwhelmed, that he may escape from that mansion of worms; but there he shall remain ever and ever, without end, henceforth in that cavern-home, void of the joys of hope. Jud. p. 23. CHAP.

The poet continues to describe Judith's escape to the town of her countrymen. Her reception is thus mentioned:

There were they blithe, those sitting in the burgh, after they heard how the Holy One spake over the high wall.

The army was rejoiced.

Towards the gates of the fast-

the people went,
men and women together,
in numbers and heaps,
in crowds and hosts.
They thronged, and ran
against the illustrious maid,
from a thousand parts,
old and young.

Here repetition of phrase is the substitute for energy of description.

The poet then gives her speech to the people:—

Then the discreet one ordered,
adorned with gold,
to her maidens,
with thoughtful mind,
that army-leader's
head to uncover,
and it on high,
bloody, to show
to the citizens —
Then spake the noble one
to all the people.
"Here may we manifestly
stare on the head

of the man illustrious for victory,
of the leader of his people,
of the odious heathen commander;
of the not living Holofernes,
he that of all men to us
most murders has done,
sore sorrows;
and more yet
would have augmented them,
but that to him God grants
not
a longer life,

BOOK IX. that he with injuries should afflict us.

I from him life took away, through God's assistance.

Now I to every man of these citizens will pray, of these shield-warriors, that ye immediately haste you to fight.

When God, the source of all, the honour-fast king, from the East sends a ray of light, bear forth your banners;

with shields for your breasts, and mail for your hams, shining helmets, go among the robbers; let their leaders fall, the devoted chiefs, by the ruddy sword! they are your enemies, destined to death, and ye shall have their doom, victory from your great leader, the mighty Lord! as he hath signified to you by my hand."

Jud. p. 24.

The sally which immediately took place, and the consequent battle, is thus described:—

Then was the host of the swift quickly gathered together, the soldiers to the field: the warriors and the nobles illustrious stepped forth. They bore the Tufas, they went to fight straight onwards: men under helms from the holy city, at the dawn itself. They dinned shields; men roared loudly. At this rejoiced the lank wolf in the wood. and the wan raven. the fowl greedy of slaughter, both from the west, that the sons of men for them should have thought to prepare

And to them flew in their paths the active devourer, the eagle, hoary in his feathers. The willowed kite, with his horned beak, sang the song of Hilda. The noble warriors proceeded. they in mail, to the battle, furnished with shields, with swelling banners. They that awhile, before the reproach of the foreigners, the taunts of the heathen endured. To them what had been hard at that play of swords, was in all repaid on the Assyrians;

their fill on corpses.

CHAP.

III.

when the Hebrews, under the banners. had sallied on their camps.

They then speedily let fly forth showers of arrows, the serpents of Hilda, from their horn bows: the spears on the ground hard stormed. Loud raged the plunderers of battle; they sent their darts into the throng of the chiefs. The angry land-owners acted as men against the odious race.

Stern-minded, they advanced with fierce spirits: they pressed on unsoftly, with ancient hate. against the mead-weary foe. With their hands, the chiefs tore from their sheaths the sheer, cross sword, in its edges tried: they slew earnestly the Assyrian combatants. Pursuing with hate, none they spared of the army-folk of the great kingdom of the living men, whom they could overcome. Jud. 24.

As Cædmon's paraphrase is a poetical narra- Cædmon's tion mixed with many topics of invention and Parafancy, it has also as great a claim to be considered as a narrative poem, as Milton's Paradise Lost has to be deemed an epic poem. It was published by Junius as the work of the ancient Cædmon, who has been already mentioned. It treats on the first part of the subjects which Bede mentions to have been the topics of the elder Cædmon; but it is presumed by Hickes not to be so ancient as the poet mentioned by Bede. I confess that I am not satisfied that Hickes is right in referring it to any other author than the person to whom Junius ascribes it.

It begins with the fall of angels, and the creation of the world. It proceeds to the

BOOK history of Adam and Eve; of Cain, and the deluge; of Abraham and of Moses. actions of Nabuchodonosor and Daniel are subjoined.

> In its first topic, "the fall of the angels," it exhibits much of a Miltonic spirit; and if it were clear that our illustrious bard had been familiar with Saxon, we should be induced to think that he owed something to the paraphrase of Cædmon. No one at least can read Cædmon without feeling the idea intruding upon his mind. As the subject is curious, I shall make no apology for very copious extracts from Cadmon, translated as literally as possible:—

On the Fall of the Angels.

To us it is much right that we the Ruler of the firmament. the Glory-King of Hosts, with words should praise, with minds should love. He is in power abundant, High Head of all creatures, Almighty Lord! There was not to him ever beginning nor origin made; nor now end cometh. Eternal Lord! But he will be always powerover heaven's stools 3, in high majesty,

truth-fast and very strenuous, Ruler of the bosoms of the sky!

Then were they set wide and ample, thro' God's power, for the children of glory, for the guardians of spirits. They had joy and splendor, and their beginning-origin, the hosts of angels; bright bliss was their great fruit.

The glory-fast thegns praised the King: they said willingly praise to their Life-Lord;

³ I use the term in the original, because such expressions as have any allusion to ancient manners should always be preserved.

they obeyed his domination with virtues.

They were very happy;
sins they knew not;
nor to frame crimes;
but they in peace lived
with their Eternal Elder.
Otherwise they began not
to rear in the sky,
except right and truth,
before the Ruler of the angels,

for pride divided them in error.

They would not prolong council for themselves! but they from self-love throw off God's.

They had much pride that they against the Lord would divide the glory-fast place, the majesty of their hosts, the wide and bright sky.

To him there grief happened, envy, and pride; to that angel's mind that this ill counsel began first to frame, to weave and wake.

Then he words said, darkened with iniquity, that he in the north part a home and high seat of heaven's kingdom would possess.

Then was God angry, and with the host wrath that he before esteemed illustrious and glorious. He made for those perfidious an exiled home, a work of retribution, Hell's groans and hard hatreds.

Our Lord commanded the punishment-house for the exiles to abide, deep, joyless,

the rulers of spirits.

When he it ready knew with perpetual night foul, sulphur including, over it full fire and extensive cold, with smoke and red flame, he commanded them over the mansion, void of council, to increase the terror-punishment.

They had provoked accusation;

grim against God gathered together,

to them was grim retribution come.

They said that they the kingdom

with fierce mind would possess,

and so easily might.
Them the hope deceived, after the Governor the high King of Heaven, his hands upreared.

He pursued against the crowd;

nor might the void of mind, vile against their Maker, enjoy might. CHAP.

IX.

BOOK Their loftiness of mind departed.

their pride was diminished.

Then was he angry; he struck his enemies with victory and power, with judgment and virtue, and took away joy: peace from his enemies, and all pleasure: Illustrious Lord! and his anger wreaked on the enemies greatly, in their own power deprived of strength.

He had a stern mind; grimly provoked; he seized in his wrath on the limbs of his enemies. and them in pieces broke, wrathful in mind. He deprived of their country his adversaries. from the stations of glory he made and cut off.

our Creator! the proud race of angels

from heaven: the faithless host. The Governor sent the hated army on a long journey, with mourning speech. To them was glory lost, their threats broken, their majesty curtailed, stained in splendor; they in exile afterwards pressed on their black way. They needed not loud to

laugh: but they in Hell's torments weary remained, and knew

woe, sad and sorry: they endured sulphur, covered with darkness. a heavy recompense, because they had begun to fight against God.

Cæd. p. 1, 2.

CEDMON thus describes the creation:—

On the Creation. There was not yet then here, except gloom like a cavern, any thing made. But the wide ground stood deep and dim for a new lordship, shapeless and unsuitable. On this with his eyes he glanced, the king stern in mind, and the joyless place beheld. He saw the dark clouds

perpetually press black under the sky, void and waste: till that this world's creation thro' the word was done of the King of Glory.

Here first made the Eternal Lord. the Patron of all creatures. heaven and earth. He reared the sky, and this roomy land established

III.

with strong powers, Almighty Ruler!

The earth was then yet with grass not green; with the ocean covered, perpetually black; far and wide the desert ways.

Then was the glory-bright Spirit of the Warder of hea-

borne over the watery abyss with great abundance. The Creator of angels commanded.

the lord of life! light to come forth over the roomy ground.

Quickly was fulfilled the high King's command; the sacred light came over the waste as the Artist ordered. Then separated the Governor of victory over the water-flood light from darkness, shade from shine; he made them both be named. Lord of life! · Light was first, thro' the Lord's word, called day, creation of bright splendor.

Pleased well the Lord at the beginning, the birth of time, the first day. He saw the dark shade black spread itself over the wide ground,

when time declined CHAP. over the oblation-smoke of the earth.

The Creator after separated from the pure shine, our Maker. the first evening. To him ran at last a throng of dark clouds. To these the King himself gave the name of night: our Saviour these separated. Afterwards, as an inheritance.

the will of the Lord made and did it eternal over the earth.

Then came another day, light after darkness. The Warder of life then commanded the greater waters in the middle to be a high-like heaven timber. He divided the watery abyss, our Governor. and made them a fastness of a firmament. This the Great One raised up from the earth, through his own word, Almighty Lord!

The world was divided under the high firmament with holy might; waters from waters: from those that yet remain under the fastness, the roof of nations. Then came over the earth,

BOOK IX. hasty to advance, the great third morning.

There were not then yet made the wide land, nor the useful ways; but the earth stood fast, covered with flood.

The Lord of angels commanded, thro' his word, the waters to be together, that now under the firmament their course hold

an appointed place.
Then stood willingly
the water under heaven,
as the Holy One commanded.

Far from each other

there was separated
the water from the land.
The Warder of life then beheld
dry regions;
the Keeper of the virtues
wide displayed them.
Then the King of Glory
named the earth.

Cæd. 3, 4.

But that part of Cædmon which is the most original product of his own fancy, is his account of Satan's hostility. To us, the "Paradise Lost" of Milton has made this subject peculiarly interesting; and as it will be curious to see how an old Saxon poet has previously treated it, we shall give another copious extract. Some of the touches bring to mind a few of Milton's conceptions. But in Cædmon the finest thoughts are abruptly introduced, and very roughly and imperfectly expressed. In Milton the same ideas are detailed in all the majesty of his diction, and are fúlly displayed with that vigour of intellect in which he has no superior.

The universal Ruler had of the angelic race, through his hand-power, the holy Lord! a fortress established. To them he well trusted that they his service

would follow,
would do his will.
For this he gave them understanding,
and with his hands made
them.
The Holy Lord

had stationed them so happily.

One he had so strongly made, so mighty in his mind's thought; he let him rule so much; the highest in heaven's kingdom;

he had made him
so splendid;
so beautiful
was his fruit in heaven,
which to him came
from the Lord of Hosts;
that he was like
the brilliant stars.

Praise ought he to have made to his Lord; he should have valued dear his joys in heaven; he should have thanked his

Lord for the bounty which in that brightness he shared; when he was permitted so long to govern.

But he departed from it to a worse thing. He began to upheave strife against the Governor of the highest heaven,
that sits on the holy seat.

Dear was he to our Lord;
from whom it could not be
hid,
that his angel began
to be over-proud.

He raised himself
against his Master;
he sought inflaming speeches;
he began vain-glorious words;
he would not serve God;
he said he was his equal
in light and shining;
as white and as bright in hue.
Nor could he find it in his
mind
to render obedience
to his God,
to his King.

He thought in himself that he could have subjects of more might and skill than the Holy God. Spake many words this angel of pride.

He thought through his own craft that he could make a more strong-like seat, higher in the heavens.

SATAN is represented as uttering this soliloquy, which begins with doubting about his enterprise, but ends in a determination to pursue it:

"Why should I contend? I cannot have any creature for my superior! I may with my hands so many wonders work!

and I must have great power to acquire a more godlike stool, higher in the heavens! Yet why should I воок іх.

sue for his grace?
or bend to him
with any obedience?
I may be
a god, as he is.
Stand by me,
strong companions!
who will not deceive me
in this contention.
Warriors of hardy mind!
they have chosen me
for their superior;
illustrious soldiers!
with such, indeed,
one may take counsel!

with such folk
may seize a station!
My earnest friends they are,
faithful in the effusions of
their mind.
I may, as their leader,
govern in this kingdom.
So I think it not right,
nor need I
flatter any one,
as if to any gods
a god inferior.
I will no longer
remain his subject." 4

AFTER narrating the consequent anger of the Deity, and the defeat and expulsion of Satan, the poet thus describes his abode in the infernal regions:

The fiend, with all his followers. fell then out of heaven: during the space of three nights and days; the angels from heaven into hell: and them all the Lord turned into devils: because that they his deed and word would not reverence. For this, into a worse light under the earth beneath the Almighty God placed them, defeated; in the black hell. There have they for ever,

for an immeasurable length, each of the fiends, fire always renewed.

There comes at last the eastern wind, the cold frost mingling with the fires.

Always fire or arrows, some hard tortures, they must have: it was made for their punishment.

Their world was turned round.

Hell was filled with execuations.

They suffer the punishment
of their battle against their
Ruler;
the fierce torrents of fire
in the midst of hell:
brands and broad flames;
so likewise bitter smoke,

vapour, and darkness. ---

They were all fallen to the bottom of that fire in the hot hell, thro' their folly and pride. Sought they other land, it was all void of light, and full of fire, a great journey of fire.—

C H A P.

Another of Satan's speeches may be cited:

Then spake the over-proud king, that was before of angels the most shining; the whitest in heaven; by his Master beloved, to his Lord endeared; till he turned to evil — Satan said, with sorrowing speech —

"Is this the narrow place, unlike, indeed, to the others which we before knew, high in heaven's kingdom, that my Master puts me in? But those we must not have, by the Omnipotent deprived of our kingdom. He hath not done us right, that he hath filled us with fire to the bottom of this hot hell, and taken away heaven's kingdom.

"He hath marked that
with mankind
to be settled.
This is to me the greatest
sorrow,
that Adam shall,

he that was made of earth, my stronglike stool possess. He is to be thus happy, while we suffer punishment: misery in this hell! Oh that I had free the power of my hands, and might for a time be out: for one winter's space, I and my army! but iron bonds lay around me! knots of chains press me down! I am kingdomless! hell's fetters hold me so hard. so fast encompass me! Here are mighty flames above and beneath: I never saw a more hateful landscape. This fire never languishes; hot over hell. encircling rings, biting manacles, forbid my course. My army is taken from me, my feet are bound,

BOOK my hands imprisoned! --Thus hath God confined me. Hence I perceive that he knows my mind. The Lord of Hosts likewise knows that Adam should from us suffer evil about heaven's kingdom, if I had the power of my hands.

> He hath now marked out a middle region;

where he hath made man after his likeness. From him he will again settle the kingdom of heaven with pure souls. We should to this end diligently labour. that we on Adam, if we ever may, and on his offspring, work some revenge."

After explaining his plan of seducing Adam to disobedience, he adds,

" If, when king, to any of my thegns I formerly gave treasures; when we in that good kingdom sat happy, and had the power of our thrones: when he to me. in that beloved time. could give no recompense, to repay my favour; let him now again, some one of my thegas, become my helper, that he may escape hence thro' these barriers: that he with wings may fly, may wind into the sky, to where Adam and Eve stand created on the earth.-

" If any of you could by any means change them. that they God's word, his command, would neglect, soon they to him would become odious. If Adam break thro' his obedience, then with them would the Supreme become enraged, and award their punishment.

"Strive ye all for this, how ye may deceive them! Then shall I repose softly, even in these bonds. To him that succeeds a reward shall be ready -I will set him near to myself."

Cædm. 6-11.

From these poems, of Beowulf, Judith, and Cædmon, it is clear that the Anglo-Saxons had begun to compose long narrative poems, rising CHAP. at times, both to fancy and feeling, and making some pretensions to the name of heroic poems. From whence did this taste originate?



The epic poems of antiquity seem to me to be the legitimate parents of all the narrative poetry of Europe, and the progress of the descent may be sufficiently traced.

THE Romans derived this species of composition from the Greeks, and cultivated it with varying success. Their epic poetry established a taste for narrative poems wherever their language spread. This appears from the poems of this sort which the writers, of the various countries of Europe under their influence, attempted to compose, and some of which may be briefly enumerated.

In the fourth century, we have a narrative poem, in Latin hexameter verse, written by VICTORINUS, an African rhetorician, on the slaughter of the Maccabees. It is not much above four hundred lines in length. 5

In the same century, Juvencus, a Spaniard, wrote a narrative poem, in hexameter verse, on the history of Christ, which contains four books, and above three thousand lines. The narration is carefully carried on, but the poetry is of an humble cast. 6

ONE of the most remarkable poems of Aure-LIUS PRUDENTIUS, a Spaniard of consular dignity.

⁵ Bib. Mag. tom. viii. p. 625-628. 6 Ib. p. 629-657.

BOOK is the Psychomachia. This is an allegorical IX., poem, in eight books, on the virtues and vices of the mind, in a sort of heroic narration. It is partly the same subject which our Spenser has combined with a chivalric story. In Prudentius, every virtue and every vice come out as persons, armed or dressed appropriately to their different qualities, and harangue and fight. It consists of one thousand and twenty-two hexameter lines.7

> In the fifth century, SEDULIUS, an Irishman, went to France, Italy, and Asia; and on his return from Achaia, settled at Rome. He has written a narrative poem on the miracles of Christ, which he calls his Paschale Opus. It is in five books, containing about two thousand hexameter lines. It is almost wholly narration and description, seldom enlivened by dialogue; but his style of verse is much superior to that of the preceding authors, and has somewhat of the air of Statius.8

> CLAUDIUS MARIUS VICTOR, a rhetorician of Marseilles, lived in the same century. His poetical commentary on Genesis is a narrative poem on the creation, the fall of man, and the subsequent history, including that of Abraham. In the part of his poem which concerns " Paradise Lost," the most original incidents are these: while Adam is addressing the Deity in a long penitential speech, they see the serpent gliding

⁷ Bib. Mag. tom. viii. p. 463-471. 8 Ib. p. 658-678.

before them. Eve counsels his destruction. CHAP. She immediately pursues him with stones, in which Adam joins, till one of them, striking a flint, elicits a spark, which instantly kindles a flame and sets the woods in a blaze. The unexpected sight of this new element of fire terrifies our parents into a hasty flight. The poem contains about eighteen hundred lines. 9

The poems of Sidonius on the emperor, his friend, contain a sort of heroic fable. In the panegyric on Avitus, the emperor speaks, as do others; and Jupiter likewise harangues. The life of St. Martin, by Paulinus, a senator of Aquitain, afterwards a bishop, in hexameter verse, must be also considered as a narrative poem of considerable length. It is in six books, and contains about three thousand seven hundred hexameter lines. Though it abounds with fiction, it is very dull.

In the sixth century, Alcimus Avitus, the archbishop of Vienne, composed a narrative poem on the Jewish history, from the creation to Exodus, in five books, comprising above two thousand lines. The first book is on the creation, the second on the fall, the third on the expulsion from Paradise, the fifth on the flood, and the sixth on the passage of the Red Sea. It is more remarkable for its antiquity than for its poetry. But it must be ranked much above the lowest in the list of the leaden goddess. 12

 ^{9&#}x27; Bib. Mag. tom. viii. p. 580—595.
 10 Sid. Apoll.
 11 Bib. Mag. tom. viii. p. 852—882.
 12 Ib. p. 596—618.

BOOK IX. Arator, a Roman sub-deacon, in the same century, wrote a narrative poem on the apostolic history, in two books, and about two thousand four hundred lines. It is more entitled to be enumerated than read. Its purpose is much better than its versification.¹³

FORTUNATUS, a loquacious poet, bishop of Poitou, devoted four books, and about two thousand lines, to a narrative poem of the life of St. Martin. As it is full of his miracles, it is full of invention; but as the poets whom he enumerates, in his proemium, as his models, are those whom we have just mentioned, it may be expected that the pupil has not obscured his tutors either by his taste or his genius. 14

In the seventh century, we have the heroic poem of Petrus Apollonius, an Italian, on the destruction of Jerusalem, in above two thousand hexameters. It obviously emulates the style and the manner of the best models. It attempts epic machinery and dramatic effect, though the success of the effort is not always equal to its ambition. One part of its machinery is, the sending the angel Raphael to the Tartarian abodes, to command one of the demons to go and persuade the Jewish leaders to revolt from the Romans, that they may bring their punishment on themselves. 15

¹³ Bib. Mag. tom. viii. p. 682—700. ¹⁴ Ib. p. 753—772.

¹⁵ Ib. p. 731-752.

In the eighth century, we have Bede's Life Chap. of Saint Cuthbert, of which a specimen will be given in the chapter on the Latin poetry of the Anglo-Saxons. It is, indeed, a romance in Latin verse. The incidents are fanciful tales of Cuthbert's miraculous adventures. They are narrated in a dramatic form, as the specimen hereafter given will show. It consists of nine hundred and seventy-nine lines.

ALL these poems are obviously the offspring of the Roman Epopeas; and show, that by them the taste for narrative poetry was excited in France, in Spain, Italy, and Britain. From the epic poems of antiquity, and their imitations, the Anglo-Saxons, as well as the Franks, and the Goths in Spain, learnt the art of constructing and carrying on an epic fable. The first imitations were in Latin, by those who knew the language and loved its poetry. But that men arose who cultivated poetry in their native tongue, as well as in the Latin language, we learn from the example of Aldhelm. His Latin poetry will be noticed in the next chapter; and* we have already remarked, from the information of Alfred, that he took great pains to compose poems for the instruction of his countrymen in their vernacular tongue.

The first narrative poems were probably composed by the ecclesiastics. The poems of Cædmon and on Judith are obviously religious; and some passages of Beowulf have that air. Such men, from their learning, would be best skilled

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BOOK in the art of narration; and from them it probably descended to the scop, or professional poet.

THAT the ecclesiastics of those ages greatly cultivated the art of narrative invention, and were successful in their efforts, we see from their legends. The miraculous stories in Gregory's dialogues, in Bede's history, and in other writers of that time, are in fact so many fanciful tales, much more poetical in their invention and narration than any of those works which then passed as poetry.

THAT the legends and lives of Saints were translated from Latin into Anglo-Saxon, we know to be a fact. Alfred caused Gregory's dialogues to be translated, which are nothing but legends or tales of the miraculous actions of the Italian saints, but so numerous as to fill one hundred and sixteen folio pages. It is as complete a specimen of fictitious narration as any book of fairy tales which has been published. Every nation of Europe, after the fall of the Roman empire, had some such narratives of supernatural agency; and therefore we must consider the monks as the great inventors of narrative fiction. So numerous were their creations, that the lives of the saints, which have been collected and published, amount, in the last edition, to above a hundred thick folio volumes, written chiefly in the early and middle ages of Europe, and all abounding with tales of supernatural agency. Some display very striking

imagery and rich invention, others are dull. CHAP. The ancient lives of the Irish saints are so extravagant in their imputed miracles, that the editors, who believe the truth of all the others, have felt it decorous to caution the reader that the fancy of these biographers has been too ardent, and their credulity too indiscriminate.

THE lives of the saints which still exist in the Anglo-Saxon language, show that they were diffused among the people; and the fact, that some ecclesiastics, like Aldhelm, chose to compose poems in their native language, to improve the people, makes it probable that many of the legends were put into Anglo-Saxon poetry.

For these reasons, we may consider the Roman epic poems as the parents of the narrative poetry of modern Europe, and the ecclesiastics who had a poetical taste, as the first composers of narrative poems in our vernacular languages, and more particularly in the Anglo-Saxon.

OF their lyric, or miscellaneous poetry, one Their of the oldest and best specimens is Alfred's Lyric poetical translation of the poetry in Boetius, which has been already noticed.

To the already copious specimens of the Anglo-Saxon poetry, we will add the following Ode, which is appended to the menology. It is a very singular and curious composition: -

The King shall hold the the work of the mind of Kingdom; giants, castles shall be seen afar, that are on this earth;

BOOK the wonderful work of wall-IX. stones.

> The wind is the swiftest in the sky; thunder is the loudest of noises:

great is the majesty of Christ; fortune is the strongest: winter is the coldest; spring has most hoar-frost: he is the longest cold: summer sun is most beautiful: the air is then hottest: fierce harvest is the happiest: it bringeth to men the tribute-fruits. that to them God sendeth-Truth is most deserving; treasures are most precious, gold, to every man; and age is the wisest, sagacious from ancient days, from having before endured much.

Woe is a wonderful burthen; clouds roam about; the young Etheling good companions shall animate to war, and to the giving of bracelets.

Strength in the earl,
the sword with the helm
shall abide battle.
The hawk in the sea-cliff
shall live wild;
the wolf in the grove;
the eagle in the meadow;
the boar in the wood
powerful with the strength of

his tusk.

The good man in his country

will do justice.
With the dart in the hand,
the spear adorned with gold,
the gem in the ring
will stand pendent and
curved.

The stream in the waves will make a great flood.

The mast in the keel will groan with the sail yards.

The sword will be in the bosom,

the lordly iron:

the lordly iron: the dragon will rest on his hillock,

crafty, proud with his ornaments; the fish will in the water

the fish will in the water produce a progeny.

The king will in the hall distribute bracelets.

The bear will be on the heath

old and terrible.

The water will from the hill bring down the grey earth.

The army will be together strong with the bravest.

Fidelity in the earl; wisdom in man!

wisdom in man!
The woods will on the ground
blow with fruit;
the mountains in the earth
will stand green.

God will be in heaven the judge of deeds. The door will be to the hall the mouth of the roomy mansion.

The round will be on the shield,

the fast fortress of the fingers.

Fowl aloft
will sport in the air;
salmon in the whirlpool
will roll with the skate;
the shower in the heavens,
mingled with wind,
will come on the world.
The thief will go out
in dark weather.
The Thyrs 16 will remain in
the fen,

alone in the land.

A maiden with secret arts, a woman, her friend will seek, if she cannot in public grow up so that men may buy her with

bracelets.
The salt ocean will rage;

the clouds of the supreme
Ruler,
and the water floods

about every land, will flow in expansive streams.

Cattle in the earth
will multiply and be reared.
Stars will in the heavens
shine brightly
as their Creator commanded
them.

God against evil; youth against age; life against death; light against darkness; army against army; enemy against enemies; hate against hate; shall every where contend: sin will steal on.

Always will the prudent strive about this world's labour to hang the thief; and compensate the more

honest for the crime committed against mankind.

The Creator alone knows whither the soul shall afterwards roam. and all the spirits that depart in God. After their death-day they will abide their judgment in their father's bosom. Their future condition is hidden and secret. God alone knows it. the preserving father! None again return hither to our houses. that any truth may reveal to man, about the nature of the Creator, or the people's habitations of glory which he himself inhabits. 17

CHAP.

¹⁶ A Thyrs was among the Northerns a giant, or wild mountain savage, a sort of evil-being somewhat supernatural.

Yee the Saxon ode in Hickes's Grammat. Anglo-Sax. p. 207, 208.

BOOK IX. There is a volume of miscellaneous Saxon poetry in the cathedral library at Exeter, the gift of its first bishop, Leofric, from which some interesting passages have been selected by the Rev. J. J. Conybeare. The curious student will find the original with a Latin translation, in the 17th volume of the Archaeologia. But as Mr. Conybeare's elegant paraphrase expresses faithfully the sense of the Saxon poet, it may not be unwelcome to extract two pasages of it for the gratification of the English reader.—

Befits it well that man should raise To Heav'n the song of thanks and praise, For all the gifts a bounteous God From age to age hath still bestow'd. The kindly seasons temper'd reign, The plenteous store, the rich domain Of this mid-earth's extended plain, All that his creatures wants could crave. His boundless pow'r and mercy gave. Noblest of you bright train that sparkle high, Beneath the vaulted sky, The Sun by day, the silver'd Moon by night, Twin fires of heav'n, dispense for man their useful light. Where'er on earth his lot be sped, For Man the clouds their richness shed. In gentler dews descend, or op'ning pour Wide o'er the land their fertilizing shower.

"The conclusion of this poem will perhaps be found to possess sufficient merit to apologise for transcribing it at length. It will doubtless re-

vol. xvii. p. 180—192. In the same MS. there are some fragments of Saxon historical poetry, or of verses alluding to historical events, partly real and partly fabulous.

mind the classical reader of the exquisite choral of HAP. song of Sophocles 19, commencing Holda la delva; and the fine moral reflection with which it terminates would not have disgraced the composition even of the most philosophic poet of antiquity." 20—

Thrice Holy He,
The Spirit Son of Deity!
He call'd from nothing into birth
Each fair production of the teeming earth;
He bids the faithful and the just aspire
To join in endless bliss Heaven's angel choir,
His love bestows on human kind
Each varied excellence of mind.
To some his Spirit-gift affords
The power and mastery of words:

So may the wiser sons of earth proclaim, In speech and measured song, the glories of his name.

Some the tuneful hand may ply, And loud before the list ning throng,

Wake the glad harp to harmony, Or bid the trump of joy its swelling note prolong. To these he gave Heaven's righteous laws to scan,

Or trace the courses of the starry host,

To these the writer's learned toil to plan,

To these the battle's pride and victor's boast; Where in the well-fought field the war-troop pour Full on the wall of shields the arrows flickering shower.

Some can speed the dart afar,
Some forge the steely blade of war,
Some o'er Ocean's stormy tide
The swift-wing'd ship can fearless guide.
Some in sweet and solemn lays
The full-ton'd voice of melody can raise.

So heav'n's high Lord each gift of strength or sense Vouchsafes to man, impartial, to dispense.

¹⁹ Sophoclis Antigone.

¹⁰ Conyb. Arch.

BOOK IX. And of the power that from his Spirit flows On each a share, on none the whole bestows. Lest favour'd thus beyond their mortal state, Their pride involve them in the sinner's fate.

WE are indebted to the same gentleman for bringing to notice a fragment of later Saxon poetry, from a MS. in the Bodleian. It occurs towards the conclusion of a MS. volume of homilies. It is a speech of death on the last home of man—the grave. The turn of thought is singular, and is more connected with the imagination than Saxon poems usually are. I transcribe Mr. Conybeare's literal translation. 21—

DEATH SPEAKS.

For thee was a house built Ere thou wert born. For thee was a mould shapen Ere thou of (thy) mother camest. Its height is not determined, Nor its depth measured, Nor is it closed up (However long it may be) Until I thee bring Where thou shalt remain: Until I shall measure thee And the sod of earth. Thy house is not Highly built (timbered), It is unhigh and low; When thou art in it The heel-ways are low, The side-ways unhigh. The roof is built Thy breast full nigh; So thou shalt in earth

Dwell full cold. Dim, and dark. Doorless is that house. And dark it is within; There thou art fast detained. And Death holds the key. Loathly is that earth-house, And grim to dwell in: There thou shalt dwell And worms shall share thee. Thus thou art laid And leavest thy friends; Thou hast no friend. That will come to thee, Who will ever enquire How that house liketh thee, Who shall ever open For thee the door And seek thee, For soon thou becomest loathly. And hateful to look upon.

³¹ See the Saxon with a Latin translation, Arch. vol. xvii. p. 174.

After these copious specimens of the Anglo-CHAP. Saxon poetry, we will merely notice, from its peculiarity, one more of Saxon, intermingled with Latin and Greek. It occurs in a very ancient MS. of Aldhelm, and thus begins:—

Thur me zerecce
Sanctus et justus
Beopn boca zleap
Bonus auctor
Calbem æthele rceop
Etiam fuit ipse
On æthel Angel-Seaxtpa
Byrcep en Bpetene.

Thus has settled me,
The holy and just one;
The man skilled in books;
The good author
Aldhelm, the noble poet,
He was also
In the country of the AngloSaxons,
A bishop in Britain.²²

²² See the remainder, containing some Greek words, in Wanley's Catalogue, p. 110.

CHAP. IV.

On the Anglo-Saxon Versification.

THE best Saxon scholars have confessed that the versification of the vernacular poetry of our ancestors was modelled by rules which we have not explored. But the passage before quoted from Bede, shows that it had really no other rule than the poet's ear. To combine his words into a rythmical cadence was all he aimed at. A few specimens will enable the

In Alfred's Boetius, part of the specimens before translated stand thus:—

reader to see what this cadence usually was.

Eala thu rcippend
Scippa tungla
Defoner and conthan
Thu on heah retle
Ecum picrart
And thu ealne hpæthe
Defon ýmbhpeaprert
And thuph thine
Dalize miht
Tunglu zenebert
Thæt he the to hepath

Spylce reo runne
Speaptpa nihta
Thiortpo abpærceth
Thuph thine meht
Blacun leoht
Beophte reoppan
Cona zemetzath
Thuph thinpa meahta rpeb
Dyilum eac tha runnan
Siner bepearath
Beophtan leohter.

Boet. 154.

THE little poem which was cited from the Saxon Chronicle is the following:—

The peanth eac abnæpeb Deonmob hæleth Orlac or eanbe Ora ýtha zepealc Oren zanoter bæth Hamol peax hæleth
Uir and popd proceop
Open pætena gethning
Open hpæler æthel
Dama beneapod.

CHAP.

The next lines may be cited because of their rhiming tendency: —

That peapth ætýpeb Uppe on pobepum Steoppa ou jtathole Thohe jtith jæphthe Dæleth hize zleape parath pibe Cometa be naman Cpært gleape men Wire rothbopan.

The versification of Cædmon's paraphrase has a similar cadence. It begins

Ur ir pihr micel
Thær pe pobepa peaps
Wepeba pulbop cyning
Wopbum hepizen
Mobum lupien.

De ir mægna rpeb Dearob calpa Deah zercearca Fpea Ælmigheig. Cæd. p. 1.

In Judith the versification is of the same species, which is taken from the description of the battle:

Tha peanth mellna penob
Snube zezeanepob
Cenna to campe
Stopon cynepope
Seczar and zerithar
Bæpon thurar
Fopon to zereohte
Fonth on zepihte
Dæleth unben helmum
Or thæpe halizan býpiz
On thæt dæzneb
Sýlr býneban reibar
plube hluinnon
Thær je hlanca zereah

Wult in palse

And the panna hiern

Wæl gifne fuzel

Wertan bezen

Tha him tha theod zuman

Thohton tilian

Fylle on pæzum

Ac him fleah on latt

Caph æter zeopn

Upiz fethena

Salopiz pada

Sang hilde leoth

Dynned nebba.

Jud. p. 24.

воок

The description of Beowulf's sailing and landing is thus given:—

Cræth he Euthcyning Oren ryan nabe Secean poloe Mænne cheosen Tha him pær manna theanr Thone rithræt him Snotene ceoplar Lyc hpon lozon Thæm the him leor pæne.-Secz pirabe Lazu cpærtiz mon Lans zemyncu Fypre rouch zepac rloca Wær on ythum Bar unben beonze Beonnar zeanpe On reem reizon repeamar. Lepat tha oren pæz holm Winbe zeryreb Flora rann healr

Fuzle zelicort
Oth tha ymb an tib
Othper bozoper
Wunben rterna
Lepaba hærbe.
Tha tha lithenbe
Lanb zerapon
Brim clifu blican
Beorgar rteape
Sibe ræ nærrar.—
Thanon up hriathe
Webera leobe
On pany rtigon

Webena leobe
On pany reigon
Sæ pubu rælbon
Sýpcon hpyrebon
Luch zepæbo
Lobe chancebon
Thær che hun ychlabe
Eache pupbon.

Ir appears to me that the only rule of the Saxon versification which we can now discover is, that the words are placed in that peculiar rhythm or cadence which is observable in all the preceding extracts. This rhythm will be felt by every one who reads the following lines:—

Thohton tilian
Fylle on pægum —
Upig pæthepa
Salopig paba —
Wopbum hepigen

Mobum lugien —
pearob ealpa
peah zercearta
Fpea Ælmihtiz.—

To produce this rhythm seems to have been the perfection of their versification. But, happily for the strength of their poetry, they CHAP. extended their rhythm sometimes into a more dignified cadence, as

Wepeba pulbop cyning —
Ymthe heolytep rceabo —
Thuph thinpa meahta rpes.—

When their words would not fall easily into the desired rhythm, they were satisfied with an approach to it, and with this mixture of regular and irregular cadence all their poetry seems to have been composed.

By this rhythm, by their inversions of phrase, by their transitions, by their omissions of particles, by their contractions of phrase, and, above all, by their metaphors and perpetual periphrasis, their poetry seems to have been distinguished.

That they occasionally sought rhime and alliteration cannot be doubted, for we have some few Anglo-Saxon poems in rhime.² But

² Mr. Conybeare remarks, that in the Exeter MS. there is one Anglo-Saxon poem, entirely written in rhime, with alliteration, p. 195. The extract which he has cited from the poem, on the day of judgment, has also the following rhimed passage:—

Thæt nu manna zehpylc Cpic thenben hep panath Leceofan mot Spa helle hiepthu, Spa heofener mæpthu; Spa leohte leoht, Spa tham latham niht; Spa thpymmer thpæce, Spa thpyrtpa ppæce; That now every man who dwells here alive,
May choose
Either wounds of hell,
Or the majesty of heaven;
Or the bright light,
Or the hateful night;
Or the power of glory,
Or the vengeance of darkness;

BOOK neither of these formed its constituent character, nor was any marked attention given to the prosodical quantity of their syllables as Hickes supposed.

> Spa mis Dpilicen speam, Sva mis Seorleem hnem: Spa pite mis ppathum, Spa pulson mis anum; Spa lire, rpa Seath, Spa him leore bich. Ibid.

Or joy with the Lord, Or mourning with devils: Or punishment with wrath, Or glory with honours; Or life, or death, Which ever he loves most.

CHAP. V.

Their Latin Poetry.

THE Latin poetry of the Anglo-Saxons ori- CHAP. ginated from the Roman poetry, and was composed according to the rules of Roman Origin of their Latin prosody. Its authors were all ecclesiastics who Poetry. had studied the classical writers and their imitators; and who followed, as nearly as their genius would permit them, the style and manner of classical composition. Sometimes they added a few absurd peculiarities, dictated by bad taste, and sometimes they used rhime. But in general the regular hexameter verse was the predominant characteristic of their poems.

THE origin of their Latin poetry may be therefore easily explained. With the works of the classical writers we are all acquainted. As the Roman empire declined, the genius of poetry disappeared. Claudian emitted some of its departing rays. But after his death it would have sunk for ever in the utter night of the Gothic irruption, if the Christian clergy had not afforded it an asylum in their monasteries, and devoted their leisure to read and to imitate it.

THE Romans had diffused their language as their conquests and colonies spread; but it would

BOOK have also perished when the Gothic irruptions destroyed their empire, if the Christian hierarchy had not preserved it. The German tribes who raised new sovereignties in the imperial province: were successively converted to Christianity; and as the new faith chiefly emanated from Rome, one religious system pervaded the western part of Europe. The public worship was every where performed in Latin. All the dignified clergy and many others were perpetually visiting Rome. The most accessible and popular works of the fathers of the church were in the Latin language. And this was the only tongue in which the ecclesiastics of Germany, France, Britain, Spain, Ireland, and Italy could compose or correspond in to be understood by each other. Hence every ecclesiastic in every posture, who aspired to any intellectual altivation or distinction, was obliged to learn the Latin language, and to write in it. From this circumstance, they nourished a necessary attachment to the Latin authors; and thus the Latin language and the classical writers were preserved by the Christian clergy from that destruction which has entirely swept from us both the language and the writings of Phœnicia, Carthage, Babylon, and Egypt.

Many of the clergy wrote homilies, or disputatious treatises; some aspired to history, and some were led to cultivate poetry. In the fourth century, Victorinus, Juvencus, and Prudentius, distinguished themselves by poems in Latin verse on devotional subjects. In the fifth century, Sedulius, Dracontius, and Sidonius, with others, cultivated Latin poetry. In the fiext age appeared Alcimus, Arator, Columbanus, and the prolific Venantius Fortunatus. Every subsequent century enumerated many ecclesiastical poets, who all alike fashioned both their genius and their works from the classical models, or their imitators. They chose, indeed, subjects more suited to their sacred profession; but they strove, according to their best abilities, to give their religious efforts all the style and the measures of the standard poetry of ancient Rome.

THE Anglo-Saxons who wrote Latin poetry drank from the same Heliconian spring, and used the prosody; and of course their Latin poetry originated from the Latin poetry of the ecclesiastics who had preceded them, and their classical models.

But though the prosody of the classical poetry furnished these writers with their metres, yet as they were in a ruder and less cultivated age, their taste was too unformed and irregular to keep to the chaste style of the Augustan bards. They undervalued the excellence to which they were familiar, and sometimes they strove to improve it by beauties of their own; beauties, however, often perceptible only to the eye or the ear of a barbaric taste.

Some of their grotesque ornaments are mentioned in the fifth century by Sidonius. He

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and

BOOK notices some verses which were so composed as to admit of being read either backward or forward. Thus:

Roma tibi subito motibus ibit amor.

Sole medere pede, ede perede melos.

HE has also given to us a specimen of another fantastic effort in two verses, of which he asks his friend to admire the disposition of the syllables:

Præcipiti modo quod decurrit tramite flumen, Tempore consumptum jam cito deficiet.

These, if read backward, will give

Deficiet cito jam consumptum tempore flumen, Tramite decurrit quod modo precipiti!

The poem of Proba Falconia, a poetess of the fourth century, was also constructed very whimsically. Her subjects were, the history of the creation, the deluge, and Christ. She narrates these histories in centos from Virgil, who knew nothing about them. She has so curiously selected above seven hundred of his lines, and so placed them, that, with the aid of titles to the different portions, the principal events of these Scripture histories are described in the words of the Mantuan bard.²

Aldhelm's Latin Poetry: Our Anglo-Saxons display occasional exertions of the same depraved taste in their Latin poetry; of which the most ancient that has descended to

^{*} Sid. Ap. lib. ix. ep. 14.

^{*} Bib. Mag. tom. viii. p. 708-716.

us consists of the compositions of Aldhelm, who CHAP. died in 709; who will be noticed again in the chapter on their literature. His verses, from the study of better models, are preferable to his pompous prose. His poetical works which remain are entitled, De Laude Virginum, De Octo principalibus Vitiis, and Ænigmata.

Towards the close of his prose treatise on his De Virginity, he stated, that he should write on Virginiam. the same subject in poetry. His preface to the poem is an acrostic address to the abbess Maxima, in hexameter verse. It consists of thirty-eight lines, so fantastically written that each line begins and ends with the successive letters of the words of the first line; and thus the first and last lines, and the initial and final letters of each line consist of the same words. In the last line the words occur backwards. The final letters are to be read upwards.

M ETRICA TIRONES NUNC FROMANT CARMINA CASTO S E t laudem capiat quadrato carmine virg O T rinus in arce Deus, qui pollens secla creavi T R egnator mundi, regnans in sedibus alti S I ndigno conferre mihi dignetur in æthr A C um sanctis requiem, quos laudo versibus isti C A rbiter altithronus qui servat sceptra supern A T radidit his cœli per ludum scandere lime N I nter sanctorum cuneos qui laude perenn I R ite glorificant moderantem regna tonante M O mnitenens Dominus, mundi formator et aucto R N obis pauperibus confer suffragia cert A Et ne concedas trudendos hostibus istin C S ed magis exiguos defendens dextera tanga T N e prædo pellax cœlorum claudere lime N V el sanctos valeat noxarum fallere scen A

BOOK IX.

Ne fur strophosus foveam detrudat in atra M C onditor a summo quos Christus servat Olymp O P astor ovile tuens ne possit tabula rapto R R egales vastans caulas bis dicere pup pu P O mnia sed custos defendat ovilia jam nun C M axima præcipuum quæ gestat numine nome N A ddere præsidium mater dignare precat U N am tu perpetuum promisisti lumine lume N T itan quem clamant sacro spiramine vate S C ujus per mundum jubar alto splendet ab ax E A tque polos pariter replet vibramine fulmen N R ex regum et princeps populorum dictus ab æv O M agnus de magno, de rerum regmine recto R I llum nec mare nec possunt cingere coel I N ec mare navigerum spumoso gurgite valla T A ut zonæ mundi que stipant æthera cels A C larorum vitam qui castis moribus isti C A uxiliante Deo vernabant flore perenn I S anctis aggrediar studiis dicere paupe R T anta tamen digne si pauper præmia proda T O mnia cum nullus verbis explanat apert E SOTSAC ANIMRAC TNAMORP CNUN SENORIT ACIRTE M.5

ALDHELM calls this quadratum carmen, a square verse. He was not the inventor of these idle fopperies of versification. Fortunatus and others had preceded Aldhelm in this tasteless path, in which authors endeavour to surprise us, not by the genius they display, but by the difficulties which they overcome.

The poem is not divided into books or chapters. It consists of two thousand four hundred and forty-three hexameter lines, the last eight of which are rhimed; the four first alternately, the others in couplets. We subjoin them:

Quis prius in spira morsum glomeravit inertem Idcirco cursim festinat credere Christo

³ Maxima Bib. Vet. Patr. tom, xiii, p. 3.

Agnoscens propriam tanta virtute salutem Insuper et meritum cumulavit sanguinis ostro, Prœmia sumpturus cum cœli cœtibus almis. Candida post sequitur cum binis martyra sertis, Integritas nitidam, nec non et passio rubram Plumabant pariter macta virtute coronam.



THE first twenty-two lines of the poem are an invocation to the Deity. The translations of the passages which we select, as specimens of his powers, are made as literal as possible.

Almighty Father! Sovereign of the world! Whose word the lucid summits of the sky With stars adorn'd, and earth's foundations fram'd; Who ting'd with purple flowers the lonely heath; And check'd the wandering billows of the main, Lest o'er the lands the foamy waves should rage (Hence rocks abrupt the swelling surge controul): Thou cheer'st the cultured field with gelid streams; And with thy dropping clouds the corn distends: Thine orbs of light expel night's dreary shade; Titan the day, and Cynthia tends the night: From thee what tribes the fields of ocean roam, What scaly hosts in the blue whirlpools play! The limpid air with fluttering crowds abounds, Whose prattling beaks their joyful carols pour, And hail thee as the universal Lord: Give, Merciful! thine aid, that I may learn To sing the glorious actions of thy saints.5

4 Maxima Bib. Vet. Patr. tom. xiii. p. 19.

Somnipotens genitor mundum ditione gubernans
Lucida stelligeri qui condis culmina cœli,
Nec non telluris formas fundamina verbo:
Pallida purpureo pingis qui flore vireta:
Sic quoque fluctivagi refrenas cærula ponti,
Mergere ne valeant terrarum littora lymphis,
Sed tumidos frangunt fluctus obstacula rupis:
Arvorum gelido qui cultus fonte rigabis,
Et segetum glumas nimbosis imbribus auges,

BOOK IX.

I seek not rustic verse, nor court the Nine. Nor from Castalia's nymphs their metres ask, Said erst to guard the Heliconian hill.

Nor, Phebus! need I thy loquacious tongue, Whom fair Latona bore on Delos' isle—

I'll rather press the thunderer with my prayers, Who gave to man the lessons of his word;

Words from the Word I ask, whom David sang, Sole offspring of the Father; and by whom Th' Almighty Sire created all we know;

So may their gracious inspiration deign

To aid their feeble servant in his lay.

HE opens his subject by telling us that there are three descriptions of persons to whom the praise of chastity belongs; the married who live

Qui latebras mundi geminato sidere demis;
Nempe diem Titan et noctem Cynthia comit.
Piscibus æquoreos qui campos pinguibus ornas,
Squamigeras formans in glauco gurgite turmas
Limpida præpetibus, sic comples aera catervis,
Garrula quæ rostris resonantes cantice pipant
Atque creatorem diversa voce fatentur.
Da prius auxilium, clemens, ut carmina possim
Indita Sanctorum modulari gesta priorum.

Maxima Bib. Vet. Patr. tom. xiii. p. 3.

6 Non rogo ruricolas versus, et commata musas Non peto Castalidas metrorum cantica nymphas Quas dicunt Helicona jugum servare supernum, Nec precor, ut Phœbus linguam sermone loquacem Dedat, quem Delo peperit Latona creatrix — Sed potius nitar precibus pulsare Tonantem, Qui nobis placidi confert oracula Verbi, Verbum de verbo peto, hoc Psalmista canebat, Corde patris genitum, quod proles unica constat, Quo pater Omnipotens per mundum cuncta creavit. Sic patris et prolis dignetur Spiritus almus Auxilium fragili clementer dedere servo.

virtuously; the married who live as if they were CHAP. single; and they who keep in the virgin state. After above an hundred lines in praise of virginity, he proceeds to describe forty-five characters who distinguished the state which he prefers; and this biographical panegyric forms the substance of his poem. Most of his applauded personages are only known in the calendars of the Romish church. Some of his images, common-places, and examples, shall be quoted.

Amid his wild and diffuse panegyric on virginity, the following images occur:

Now let my verses cull the rarest flowers, And weave the virgin crowns which grace the good; What can more charm celestials in our conflict, Than the pure breast by modest virtue ruled?

The chaste who blameless keep unsullied fame Transcend all other worth, all other praise; The Spirit high-enthron'd has made their hearts His sacred temple.8

For chastity is radiant as the gems
Which deck the crown of the Eternal King;
It tramples on the joys of vicious life,
And from the heart uproots the wish impure.
The yellow metal which adorns the world
Springs from the miry chambers of the earth:

Nunc igitur raros decerpant carmina flores E quîs virgineas valeant fabricare coronas Quid plus cælicolas juvat in certamine nostro Quam integritatis amor regnans in pectore puro?

⁸ Virginitas castam servans sine crimine carmen, Cætera virtutum vincit præconia laude; Spiritus altithroni templum sibi vindicat almus.

BOOK IX.

So the pure soul, its image, takes its birth From carnal passions of terrestrial love. And as the rose excels the Tyrian dves. And all the gaudy colours work'd by art: As the pale earth the lucid gem creates In rustic soils beneath the dusty glebe; As yellow flowers shoot gaily from the corn, When spring revives the germinating earth: So sacred chastity, the dear delight Of all the colonies of heaven, is born From the foul appetites of worldly life.9 And as the vine, whose spreading branches, bent With stores immense, the dresser's knife despoils, Exists the glory of the fruitful fields; And as the stars confess th' all-glorious ray, When in his paths oblique the sun rolls round, Transcending all the orbs which grace the poles: So Chastity, companion of the bless'd, Excelling, meekly, every saintly worth, Is hail'd the queen of all the virtues here. 10

⁹ Virginitas fulget lucens, ut gemma coronæ, Quæ caput æterni præcingit stemmate regis: Hæc calcat pedibus spurcæ consortia vitæ: Funditus extirpans petulantis gaudia carnis. Auri materiem fulvi, obrizumque metallum Ex quibus ornatur præsentis machina mundi, Glarea de gremio prodidit sordida terræ. Sic casta integritas auri flaventis imago Gignitur e spurca terreni carne parentis. Ut rosa Puniceo tincturas murice cunctas Coccineosque simul præcellit rubra colores. Pallida purpureas ut gignit glarea gemmas, Pulverulenta tegit quas spurci glebula ruris; Ut flos flavescens scandit de cortice corni Tempore vernali, dum promit germina tellus: Sic sacra virginitas cœlorum grata colonis Corpore de spurco sumit primordia vitæ. Maxima Bib. Vet. Patr. tom. xiii. p. 4.

Vinea frugiferis ut constat gloria campis, Pampinus immensos dum gignit palmite botros,

The chastity which rules the virtuous frame,
A virgin flower which blooms undurt in age,
Falls not to earth, nor sheds its changing leaves.
Behold the lilies waving in the fields,
The crimson rose, sweet blushing on the bank,
Which crowns the conquering wrestler, and becomes
The garland for the victor in the course:
So purity, subduing rebel nature,
Wins the fair diadem which Christ awards.

The peacock's many-colour'd plumage waves, And the soft circles glow with Tyrian dyes: Its tawny beauties, and its graceful form Surpass the proudest labours of our skill. 12

WE may add from the same poem his description of the destruction of paganism, as

Vinitor exspoliat frondentes falcibus antes:
Sidera præclaro cedunt ut lumina soli,
Lustrat dum terras obliquo tramite Titan,
Cuncta supernorum convincens astra polorum:
Sic quoque virginitas quæ sanctos indita comit,
Omnia sanctorum transcendans præmia supplex
Integritas quoque virtutum regina vocatur.

Maxima Bib. Vet. Patr. tom. xiii. p. 4.

Integritas animæ regnans in corpore casto Flos est virgineus, qui nescit damna senectæ. Nec cadit in terram ceu fronde ligustra fatiscunt. Cernite fecundis ut vernent lilia sulcis, Et rosa sanguineo per dumos flore rubescat. Ex quibus ornatus qui vincit forte palestris, Accipit in circo victor certamine, serta. Haud secus integritas devicta carne rebelli. Pulchras gestabit Christo regnante coronas.

Ibid.

¹³ Quanquam versicolor flavescat penna pavonis Et teretes rutilent plus rubro murice cycli, Cujus formosa species et fulva venustas Omnia fabrorum porro molimina vincit.

Ibid.

CHAP.

BOOK exhibiting the degree of his powers of poetical composition:

Not Mars, the lord of wounds, who scatters round The seeds of war, and fills the rancorous heart With Gorgon poisons, can assist his fanes; Nor Venus can avail, nor her vile boy. The golden statues of Minerva fall, Tho' fools proclaim her goddess of the arts; Nor he for whom, as ancient fictions sing, The leafy vines their precious branches spread, Can prop the columns nodding with their gods. The marbles tremble with terrific crash. And the vast fabric rushes into dust. Ev'n Neptune, rumour'd sovereign of the waves, Who by his swelling billows rules the main, He cannot save his sculptur'd effigies, Whose marble brows the golden leaves surround, Not ev'n Alcides, who the centaurs crush'd. And dar'd the fiery breath of prowling Cacus, When from his throat his words in flames were pour'd, Tho' his right hand the dreadful club may grasp, Can shield his temples when the Christian prays. 13

¹³ Non Mars vulnificus qui belli semina spargit; Rancida Gorgoneis inspirans corda venenis Delubri statuis potuit succurrere parmis. Nec Venus, aut Veneris prodest spurcissima proles. Aurea sternuntur fundo simulacra Minervæ, Quamque deam stolidi dixerunt arte potentem : Nec Bacchus valuit, cui frondent palmite vites, Ut referent falso veterum figmenta librorum, Numine nutantes fani fulcire columnas. Sed titubant templi tremebundis marmora crustis. Et ruit in præceps tessellis fabrica fractis. Neptunus fama dictus regnator aquarum; Qui regit imperium ponti turgentibus undis, Falsas effigies, quas glauco marmore sculpunt, Aurea seu fulva quas ornant petala fronte, Haud valuit veterum tunc sustentare deorum. Alcides fertur Centauri victor opimus,

ONE other example will be a sufficient speci- CHAP. men of his De Laude Virginum. Two sisters were condemned for refusing to sacrifice to idols. One was punished first in the presence of the other, with the hope that her constancy might be affected by her sister's suffering. Instead of this event, Secunda's speech is thus represented by Aldhelm:

Firmly she said, "Secunda ne'er will tremble;
Bring all your blood-stain'd tortures to oppress me,
Your fires, your swords, your scourges red with gore,
Your clubs, your cords, your stones that pour like hail;
Bring all your cruel instruments of pain;
Yet, conquering my tormentors, will I triumph.
As many means of death you fiercely frame,
So many crowns in heaven's bright plains will bless us." ***

His poem "De Octo principalibus Vitiis," or on the eight principal vices, opens with an allusion to the preceding poem:

Thus have I sung the praises of the saints, Whose fame re-echoes round the concave sky. Now must the verse the mighty battles paint,

Flammea qui pressit latronis flamina Caci,
Quamvis fumosis ructaret flabra loquelis.
Herculis in crypta sed torquet dextera clavam
Nec tamen in templo rigida virtute resultat,
Quæ famulus Christi supplex oramina fudit.

Maxima Bib. Vet. Patr. tom. xiii. p. 12.

Adfer cuncta simul nobis tormenta cruenta;
Ignes et macheras et rubras vibice virgas,
Restes et fustes et dura grandine saxa.
Quot tu pœnarum genera crudeliter infers,
Ast ego tanta feram victo tortore tropæa,
Quot tu concinnas crudi discrimina lethi
Tot nos in supera numerabimus arce coronas. Ibid. p. 18

BOOK IX. Waged by the vices; which from virgin tribes Withhold the kingdoms of celestial joy, And shut the portals of their lucid walls. 15

This poem contains four hundred and fiftyeight Latin hexameters. After an introduction of some length, it treats of the eight vices in this order; gluttony, luxury, avarice, anger, despair, slothfulness, vain-glory, pride. It closes with a diffuse peroration.

His allegorical introduction begins with these lines:—

The crowding legions gather to the war,
Justice' fair friends, and virtue's holy troops;
'Gainst these the vices fix their camps malign,
And whirl their thickening spears of basest deeds.
The rival combat glows, the banners float,
And the loud clangor of the trumpet roars. 16

On luxury he exclaims: -

Indecent words from this base monster spring, From him scurrility and folly's gibes; Love, frivolous deceiver! and excess. Oh what illustrious men! how great, how many!

¹⁵ Digestis igitur sanctorum laudibus almis, Quorum rumores sub cœli culmine flagrant; Restat, ut ingentes depromant carmina pugnas, Ex vitiis procedentes, virtutibus atque Virginibus Christi, quæ cœli regna negabunt, Florida lucifluæ claudentes limina portæ.

Maxima Bib. Vet. Patr. tom. xiii. p. 19.

Ecce catervatim glomerant ad bella phalanges, Justitiæ comites et virtutum agmina sancta, His adversantur vitiorum castra maligna, Spissa nefandarum quæ torquent spicula rerum, Æmula ceu pugnat populorum pugna duorum, Dum vexilla ferunt et clangit classica salpix. Maxima Bib. Vet. Patr. t. xiii. p. 19. Has this fierce enemy thrust down to hell!
Yet could he not, tho' mask'd in beauty's shape,
From Joseph tear the excelling palm of virtue,
When the voluptuous net the fair one wove,
He spurn'd her charms, and from his garment fled;
By this he well deserv'd the throne of Memphis.¹⁷



His declaration on avarice is in these phrases:—

Next avarice leads the war, and heads a band
Of dense array, conductress of the fight;
She not alone the public streets pervades
With blood-stain'd arms, and shafts in poison dipp'd.
Her base companions follow — frauds and thefts,
A thousand lies, and actions false and vile;
Base appetites of gain, and perjuries throng:
The hosts of rapine, stain'd with every crime,
Heedless of oaths, join in an ardent band. 18

17 Ex hoc nascuntur monstro turpissima verba,
Nec non scurrilitas et scævo ludicra gestu,
Frivolus, et fallax amor, ac petulantia luxus.
O quantos qualesve viros, et laude celebres,
Hæc Bellona ferox sub tristia Tartaria trusit!
Non sic egregium virtutis perdere palmam
Forma venustatis valuit compellere Joseph,
Qui dominam sprevit nectentem retia luxus,
Et stuprum fugiens pepli velamina liquit:
Idcirco felix meruit Memphitica sceptra.
Maxima Bib. Vet. Patr. t. xiii. p. 20.

18 Post Philargyria producit tertia bellum,—
Hæc ductrix pugnæ stipatur milite denso.
Non sola graditur per publica strata pedestris,
Arma cruenta ferens et spicula lita veneno.
Hæc comites pravos, itidem mendacia mille,
Fraudes et fures, ac falsis frivola gestis,
Appetitus turpis lucri et perjuria inepta,
Atque rapinarum maculatos crimine questus,
Conglobat in cuneum cum falsis testibus ardens.

BOOK IX. His first verses on anger are,

Ferocious wrath the fourth battalion calls,
And, always raging, hurries to the fight;
He breaks the pious peace of brothers' love,
And goads their jarring minds to mutual war;
Hence impious slaughters—hence the shouts of rage—
And gnashing indignation clamours loud. 19

On vain-glory he exclaims, 20

How the false thief his lying promise pours,
To darken all the solid bliss of life!
And can it not suffice that this fair world,
Which round the pole in devious motion glides,
Exists to gratify all human needs?
Must heavenly honours earth's frail children grasp?
What crimes, what wrong, to wretched mortals spring
From the vain passion of transcendant fame!

His Ænigmata may be next considered. Its poetical prologue presents to us a curious instance of that fantastic and difficult versification which some men in former times pur-

19 Ast vero quartam trux congregat ira catervam, Quæ semper furibunda cupit discrimina belli: Et ciet ad pugnam mentes discordia fratrum, Dum copulata piæ disrumpit fædera pacis; Ex hoc nascuntur cædes cum strage nefandæ Et clamor vocis, simul indignatio frendens.

Maxima Bib. Vet. Patr. t. xiii. p. 20.

30 O quam falsa latro spondebat frivola mendax,
Ut concessa rudis fuscaret munera vitæ,
Nonne satis foret, ut quadro cum cardine mundus,
Quem vertigo poli longis anfractibus ambit,
Usibus humanis serviret rite per œvum,
Infula terrenos ni cœli comat alumnos?
Heu scelus, heu facinus, miseris mortalibus ortum!
Et hoc ex vana presertim gloria fretus!

Maxima Bib. Vet. Patr. t. xiii. p. 21.

sued. Both the beginning and the final letters CHAP. of the thirty-six hexameters which compose it, present to us, in succession, one of this sentence: "Aldhelmus cecinit millenis versibus odas."

A rbiter, ætherio Jupiter qui regmine sceptr A L ucifluum que simul cœli regale tribuna L D isponis, moderans æternis legibus illu D H orrida nam multans torsisti membra Behemot H Ex alto quondam rueret dum luridus arc E L impida dictanti metrorum carmina præsu L M unera nunc largire: rudis quo pandere reru M V ersibus ænigmata queam clandestina fat U. S i Deus indignis tua gratis dona rependi S C astalidas nymphas non clamo cantibus istu C E xamen neque spargebat mihi nectar in or E, C inthi sic nunquam perlustro cacumina, sed ne C In Parnasso procubui, nec somnia vid I. N am mihi versificum poterit Deus addere carme N I nspirans stolidæ pia gratis munera ment I. T angit si mentem, mox laudem corda rependun T M etrica: nam Moysen declarant carmina vate M J am dudum cecinisse celebris vexilla tropæ I L ate per populos inlustria, qua nitidus So L L ustrat ab Oceani jam tollens gurgite . . . L E t Psalmista canens metrorum carmina voc E N atum divino promit generamine nume N In cœlis prius exortum, quam Lucifer orb I S plendida formatis fudisset lumina sæcli S. V erum si fuerint bene hæc ænigmata vers U E xplosis penitus nevis et rusticitat E R itu dactilico recte decursa nec erro R S eduxit vana specie molimina menti S; I ncipiam potiora; seu Deus arida serv I, B elligero quondam qui vires tradidit Jo B, V iscera perpetui roris si repleat haust U. Siccis nam laticis duxisti cautibus amne S O lim, cum cuneus transgresso marmore rubr O D esertum penetrat: cecinit quod carmine Davi D

воок іх.

A rce poli genitor servas qui secula cunct A S olvere jam scelerum noxas dignare nefanda S.²²

THESE ænigmata consist of twenty tetrastica, or stanzas of four lines, on various subjects; as the earth, the wind, clouds, nature, the rainbow, the moon, fortune, salt, the nettle, and such like — of fourteen pentasticha of five lines, of thirteen hexasticha of six lines each, nineteen stanzas of seven lines, ten of eight lines, eleven of nine lines, and thirteen of ten lines each.

In the collection of Boniface's letters, there is a singular Latin poem in rhime, entitled the poem of Aldhelm, Carmen Aldhelmi.

As the rhimes of this composition are more remarkable than its poetry, I will cite the first few lines, with a prose translation in the notes:—

Lector caste catholice
Atque obses athletice
Tuis pulsatus precibus
Obnixe flagitantibus
Hymnista carmen cecini
Atque responsa reddidi
Sicut pridem pepigeram
Quando profectus fueram
Usque diram Domnoniam
Per carentem Cornubiam
Florulentis cespitibus
Et fæcundis graminibus
Elementa inormia
Atque facta informia

Quassantur sub ætherea
Convexa cæli camera
Dum tremit mundi machina
Sub ventorum monarchia.
Ecce nocturno tempore
Orto brumali turbine
Quatiens terram tempestas
Turbabat atque vastitas
Cum fracti venti fædere
Baccharentur in æthere
Et rupto retinaculo
Desævirent in sæculo.²²

Maxima Bib. Vet. Patr. tom. xiii. p. 23.

²³ Chaste catholic reader, and strenuous friend; urged by your prayers, earnestly intreating me, I have composed a poem, and returned an answer, as I formerly agreed to

This poem contains two hundred and four lines CHAP. in this measure.

But Aldhelm is also remarkable for having given us a direct testimony of the use of rhime in England before the year 700. In his treatise " De Laudibus Virginitatis," he says: -

" It may be expressed not unsuitably in rhimed verse: -(Carmine rythmico)

> Christus passus patibulo, Atque læti latibulo; Virginem virgo virgini 23 Commendabat tutamini.

This clear and decisive testimony destroys the favourite system of our men of letters, that the use of rhime in Europe came from the Arabs in Spain. Aldhelm used it before they entered Spain; and the ancient Welsh bards long before Aldhelm.

Our venerable Bede attempted Latin poetry, Latin but the Muses did not smile upon his efforts. Poetry of Bede. His compositions comprise some hymns, some

do, when I went to dismal Devonshire, through Cornwall, void of flowering turfs and fruitful grass. The vast elements are shaken under the æthereal convex chamber of the sky, while the machine of the world trembles under the monarchy of the winds. Lo! in the night, when the wintry whirlwind has risen, the tempest shakes the earth, and desolation terrifies; when the bursting winds rage in the air, and, having broken through their confinement, madden on the earth.

23 Aldhelm De Laud. s. 7. p. 297. Whart. ed. 1693. See further on this subject, the Essays on Rhime in the Archeologia, vol. xiv. p. 168-204.

BOOK elegiac poetry, and the life of St. Cuthbert in hexameter verse.

> This Life consists of a preface and forty-six chapters, which include nine hundred and seventy-nine lines. It has little other merit than that of an Anglo-Saxon labouring at Latin prosody in the dark period of the seventh century. It has not the vigour or the fancy which occasionally appear in Aldhelm's versification; and therefore a few passages only will be quoted.

HE begins in this humble style: —

That many lights should shine in every age, T' illume the loathsome shades of human night With his celestial flame, the Lord permits: And tho' our light supreme is Christ divine, Yet God has sent his saints with humbler ravs To burn within his church. With sacred fire, Love fills their minds, and Zeal inflames their speech. He spreads his numerous torches thro' the world, That the new rays of burning faith, diffus'd With starry virtues, every land may fill. 24

His invocation is much inferior to Aldhelm's:

Aid me, Supreme! the Spirit's gifts proceed From thee; and none can fitly sing thy grace

²⁴ Multa suis Dominus fulgescere lumina seclis Donavit, tetricas humanæ noctis ut umbras Lustraret divina poli de culmine flamma. Et licet ipse deo natus de lumine Christus Lux sit summa, Deus sanctos quoque jure lucernæ Ecclesiæ rutilare dedit, quibus igne magistro Sensibus instet amor, sermonibus æstuat ardor, Multifidos varium lychnos qui sparsit in orbem. Ut cunctum nova lux fidei face fusa sub axem Omnia sidereis virtutibus arva repleret.

Smith's Bede, p. 268.

Without thy help. Oh, thou! who tongues of flame Erst gave, now send the treasures of thy word To him who sings thy gifts! 25



THE following legend is selected as a specimen of the general style of the narration.

The youth now bent beneath a sudden pain, ²⁶
And led his languid footsteps with a pine.
When on a day as in the air he plac'd
His weary limbs, and meek yet mourning lay,
An horseman cloth'd in snowy garments came,
And graceful as a courser: — He saluted
The youth reclin'd, who offer'd his obeisance.
"My prompt attentions should be gladly paid
To you — if grievous pains did not withhold me:

²⁵ Tu, rogo, summe, juva, donorum spiritus auctor, Te sine nam digne fari tua gratia nescit. Flammivomisque soles dare qui nova famina linguis Munera da verbi linguæ tua dona canenti. Smith's Bede, p. 268.

²⁶ Parvulus interea subiti discrimine morbi Plectitur, atque regit vestigia languida pino. Cumque die quadam sub divo fessa locasset Membra dolens solus mitis puer, ecce repente Venit eques niveo venerandus tegmine, nec non Gratia cornipedi similis, recubumque salutat, Obsequium sibi ferre rogans. Cui talia reddit, " Obsequiis nunc ipse tuis adsistere promptus Vellem, in diro premeretur compede gressus. Nam tumet ecce genu, nullis quod cura medentum Tempore jam multo valuit mollire lagonis." Desilit hospes equo, palpat genu sedulus ægrum, Sic fatus: " Similæ nitidam cum lacte farinam Olla coquat pariter ferventis in igne culinæ. Hacque istum calida sanandus inunge tumorem." Hæc memorans conscendit equum, quo venerat, illo Calle domum remeans. Monitus medicina secuta est, Agnovitque sacer medicum venisse superni Judicis a solio summo, qui munere clausos Restituit visus piscis de felle Tobiæ. Ibid. p. 269, 270. BOOK IX. See, how my knee is swell'd — no leech's care Thro' a long lapse of time has sooth'd the evil."

Straight leap'd the stranger from his horse, and strok'd The part diseas'd, thus counselling; "The flour Of wheat and milk boil quickly on the fire, And spread the mixture warm upon the tumour." Remounting then he took the road he came; And Cuthbert us'd his medicine, and found That his physician from th' exalted throne Of the Supreme had come, and eas'd his pain, As with the fish's gall he once restor'd The light to poor Tobias.

There are some hymns of Bede remaining. The hymn on the year deserves our peculiar notice, as it shows that he also used rhime, and gives additional support to that column of evidence which enabled me to trace the use of rhime into the fourth century.

The first part of the hymn on the year consists of a few hexameters, some of which seem to have been meant to rhime. These are succeeded by fifty-eight lines, which correctly rhime in couplets, and which are not hexameters. They are not worth a translation, being only curious for their rhimes. I add the first twelve.

Annus solis continetur quatuor temporibus,
Ac deinde adimpletur duodecim mensibus.
Quinquaginta et duabus currit hebdomadibus
Trecentenis sexaginta atque quinque diebus.
Sed excepta quarta parte noctis atque diei
Quæ dierum superesse cernitur serie.
De quadrante post annorum bis binorum terminum,
Calculantes colligendum decreverunt bissextum.
Hinc annorum diversantur longe latitudines
Quorum quidam embolismi, quidam fiunt communes.

Brevis quippe qui vocant communis lunaribus Solis semper duodenis terminatur mensibus. Longus autem qui omnino embolismus dicitur Lunæ tribus atque decem cursibus colligitur Brevioris anni totus terminatur circulus Trecentenis quinquaginta ac quatuor diebus, Longus vero lunæ annus in dierum termino Continetur trecenteno, octogeno, quaterno. ²⁷



In the same poem he frequently makes his hexameters rhime.

In another part of the same poem he introduces a series of middle rhimes; as,

Adventum domini, non est celebrare Decembri, Post ternas nonas, neque quintas ante calendas, Pascha nec undenas, Aprilis ante calendas, Nec post septenas, Maias valet esse calendas, Virgo puerperio, dedit anno signa secundo, Illius magni cycli, modo bis revolvit....

Triginta que duos, quingentos qui tenet annos, Illius angelici, dantes paschalia cycli, Qui constat denis, annis simul atque novenis. 28

The comma marks the position of the middle rhime. He adds thirty-six more lines of this sort.

WE have also of Bede's a long poem on the martyr Justin. The beginning may be given to show its form.

²⁷ Bedæ Opera, tom. i. p. 476. That Bede had observed the middle, or what have been called Leonine rhimes, is clear from his adducing one as a specimen how poets use the figure Homæoteleuton:

" Poetæ hoc modo ;

Pervia divisi, patuerunt cærula ponti." Tom. i. Op. p. 62.

²⁸ Bedæ Opera, tom. i. 485. Simeon Dun., p. 96., quotes a long poem of Bede, on the day of judgment, in hexameter Latin verse.

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Quando Christus Deus noster Natus est ex virgine Edictum imperiale Per mundum insonuit,

Quatenus totius orbis Fieret descriptio. Nimirum quia in carne Tunc ille apparuit. 29

Latin
Poetry of
Boniface.

Boniface, the Anglo-Saxon who went a self-devoted missionary to Germany, and, after converting one hundred thousand from their idolatry, was murdered in 755, attempted poetry. Some of the verses which he subjoined to his epistolary correspondence yet remain to us. In the following, the middle lines represent an acrostic of the name of the friend to whom he writes. It is in Latin *rhimes*. The acrostic begins when he mentions his friend's name:

Vale frater, florentibus
Juventutis cum viribus:
Ut floreas cum Domino
In sempiterno solio
Qua martyres in cuneo
Regem canunt æthereo
Prophetæ apostolicis
Consonabunt et laudibus
Aitharde nunc nigerrima
Imi cosmi contagia
Temne fauste Tartarea
Hæc contra hunc supplicia
Alta que super æthera
Rimari petens agmina

Dominum quæ semper choris Verum comunt angelicis. Qua rex regum perpetuo Cives ditat in sæculo Iconisma sic cherubin Ut et gestes cum seraphin Editus apostolorum Filius prophetarum Summa sede ut gaudeas Unaque simul fulgeas Excelsi regni præmia Lucidus captes aurea In que throno æthereo Christum laudes preconio. 30

On another occasion he closes a letter to pope Gregory with six complimentary ³¹ hexameters.

²⁹ Bede, tom. iii. p. 367.

31 Ibid. p. 126.

^{3°} Maxima Bib. Patrum, xiii. p. 70. They contain nothing worth translating.

Boniface is once called by a contemporary the CHAP. client of Aldhelm. 32

Among the correspondents of Boniface we of Leobfind some poets. Leobgitha, an Anglo-Saxon githa. lady, closes a letter to him with these four verses, which are curious, for being *rhimed* hexameters:

Arbiter omnipotens, solus qui cuncta creavit In regno patris, semper qui lumine fulget. Quia jugiter flagrans, sic regnet gloria Christi Illæsum servet semper te jure perenni. 33

Th' Almighty Judge, who in his Father's realms Created all, and shines with endless light, May he in glory reign, and thee preserve In everlasting safety and delight.

She introduces these verses with a letter, of which a few paragraphs may be selected. " I ask your clemency to condescend to recollect the friendship which some time ago you had for my father. His name was Tinne: he lived in the western parts, and died about eight years ago. I beg you not to refuse to offer up prayers to God for his soul. My mother desires also to be remembered to you. Her name is Ebbe. She is related to you, and lives now very laboriously, and has been long oppressed with great infirmity. I am the only daughter of my parents, and I wish, though I am unworthy, that I may deserve to have you for my brother; because in none of the human race have I so much confidence as in you. I have endeavoured

³³ Maxima Bib. Patrum, xiii. p. 93. 33 Ibid. p. 83.

BOOK to compose these under-written verses according to the discipline of poetical tradition, not confident with boldness, but desiring to excite the rudiments of your elegant mind, and wanting your help. I learnt this art from the tuition of Eadburga, who did not cease to meditate the sacred law."

Of Cana.

Cæna, an Anglo-Saxon archbishop, another of the correspondents of the German missionary, annexes to a letter which he wrote to Lullus, six lines, which are hexameters, but rhime in the middle of each line:

Vivendo felix Christi laurate triumphis Vita tuis, seclo specimen, charissime cœlo, Justitiæ cultor, verus pietatis amator, Defendens vigili sanctas tutamine mandras Pascua florigeris pandens prædulcia campis Judice centenos portans venienti maniplos, 34

There is no more of his poetry extant.

Of Ethilwald.

ETHILWALD, the friend and pupil of Aldhelm, was also a poet in this period. There is a letter from Aldhelm to his beloved son and pupil Æthelwald yet extant. There is another from the disciple to his master, conceived in terms of great affection and respect, in which he says that he has sent three poems in two different species of poetry; one in heroic verse, the hexameter and pentameter, in seventy verses; another not formed on quantity, but consisting of eight syllables in every line, and one and the same letter, adapted to similar cross paths of lines; the third made in similar lines of verses CHAP. and syllables, on the transmarine journey of V. Boniface. 35

There are no poems immediately subjoined to the letter, but within three pages some poems follow which seem to be some of those described by Ethilwald. We infer this, because the last purports by its contents to be written by Ethilwald ³⁶, and the one preceding it speaks of Aldhelm ³⁷, as if it were addressed to him. Both are in the singular sort of verse above described.

This singular versification seems to be a peculiar alliteration, which these passages illustrate:

Summum satorem solia
Sedet qui per æthralia —
Cuncta cernens cacumine
Cælorum summo lumine —

Curvato colli cervicem Capitis atque verticem, Titubanti tutamina Tribuat per solamina

35 Max. Bib. Pat. 13. 93.

³⁶ Vale, vale, fidissime, Phile Christi charissime Quem in cordis cubiculo Cingo amoris vinculo — Salutatis supplicibus Æthelwaldi cum vocibus.

Farewell, farewell, most faithful friend, most dear to Christ; whom in the chamber of my heart I surround with the bond of love—the humble voice of Ethelwald having saluted thee.

Maxima Bib. Pat. p. 98.

37 Althelmum nam altissimum Cano atque clarissimum.

For I sing Aldhelm, the most lofty and most illustrious.

Ibid. p. 98.

BOOK Sacro sancta sublimiter Neque nocet nitoribus Suffragans manus fortiter. — Caput candescens crinibus Cingunt capilli nitidis: -

Nemerosis cespitibus Ruris rigati rivulo Roscidi roris sedulo -

THESE poems are more remarkable for these syllabic difficulties of versification than for any other quality, except the absence of the true poetical genius.

THE rhimed poems which we have cited from Aldhelm, Bede, Boniface, Leobgitha, Cena, and Ethilwald, all Anglo-Saxons who wrote before and between 700 and 750, show that the use of rhime was a favourite amusement among the Anglo-Saxons, at this period, in their Latin poetry.

Alenin's Latin Poetry.

ALCUIN was another poet who contributed to adorn the eighth century. Some of his poems have been printed among those of Walafrid Strabo, which his editor, Du Chesne, has noticed. He has left many poetical compositions, among which his verses to Charlemagne, and his religious and moral poetry, form the principal He sometimes rhimes, as in this poem, of which the loose measure reminds us of Swift's petition:

Quam imprimis speciosa quadriga: homo, leo, vitulus et aquila. Septuaginta unum per capitula colloquuntur de domino paria. In secunda subsequentur protinus homo, leo loquitur et vitulus Quibus inest ordinate positus decimus atque novem numerus.38

Sixteen more lines follow, rhiming in the same manner.

³⁸ Alb. Opera. ed. Du Ch. p. 1686.

The following poem we may call a religious CHAP. sonnet. I quote it, because, as all the lines but two rhime together at different distances, I think it an early specimen of that sort of rhime which afterwards became improved into the sonnet.

Qui cœli cupit portas intrare patentes,
Sæpius hunc pedibus intret et ipse suis.
Hæc est perpetuæ venienti porta salutis,
Hoc est lucis iter et via jam veniæ.
Hæc domus alma Dei, hic sunt thesaura tonantis,
Sanctorum multæ reliquiæ que patrum.
Idcirco ingrediens devota mente viator,
Sterne solo membra, pectore carpe polum.
Hic Deus, hic sancti tibi spes, hic terra salutis.
Sit conjuncta tuo pectore firma fides. 39

Who seeks to enter heaven's expanded gates,
Must oft within these sacred walls attend;
Here is the gate of ever-during bliss,
The path of light, of pardon, and of peace,
The house of God, the treasures of his power,
And numerous relics of the holiest men.
With mind devoted, traveller, enter here,
Here spread your limbs, and fill your heart with heav'n;
Here sacred hopes, here God himself awaits thee,
If stedfast faith thy humble mind controul.

In another poem, on a lady building a temple, who was one of the correspondents of Boniface, he mentions Ina, the Saxon king, in his way:

A third ruler received the supreme sceptre, Whom the nations call In with uncertain cognomen, Who now governs by right the kingdom of the Saxons.

THERE is another which seems to have been meant to rhime at different distances:

³⁹ Alb. Opera. ed. Du Ch. p. 1697.

BOOK IX. O mortalis homo mortis reminiscere casus Nil pecude distas si tantum prospera captas. Omnia quæ cernis variarum gaudia rerum Umbra velut tenuis veloci fine recedunt. Præcave non felix ne te dum nescis et audis Quassans præcipiti dissolvat turbine finis. Porrige poscenti victum, vel contege nudum Et te post obitum sic talia facta beabunt.⁴⁰

Mortal! the casualties of death remember!

If wealth alone we seek, we are but cattle.

Know! all the various joys which charm below,
Like a light-flying shade will soon depart.

Beware! lest in the hour of careless mirth
The final whirlwind shake thee into ruin.

Go, feed the hungry and the naked clothe!

Such deeds will bless thee in the grave we loathe.

Some of his poetry is pleasing. The following is his address to his cell, when he quitted it for the world 41:

O my lov'd cell, sweet dwelling of my soul,
Must I for ever say, dear spot, farewell!
Round thee their shades the sounding branches spread
A little wood, with flowering honours gay;
The blooming meadows wave their healthful herbs,
Which hands experienc'd cull to serve mankind;
By thee, mid flowery banks, the waters glide
Where the glad fishermen their nets extend;

4° Alb. Opera. ed. Du Ch. p. 1721.

41 O mea cella mihi habitatio dulcis amata Semper in æternum, O mea cella, vale. Undique te cingit ramis resonantibus arbos Silvula florigeris semper onusta comis. Prata salutiferis florebunt omnia et herbis Quas medici quærit dextra salutis ore. Flumina te cingunt florentibus undique ripis, Retia piscator qua sua tendit ovans. Thy gardens shine with apple-bending boughs, Where the white lilies mingle with the rose; Their morning hymns the feather'd tribes resound. And warble sweet their great Creator's praise. Dear cell! in thee my tutor's gentle voice The lore of sacred wisdom often urg'd: In thee at stated times the Thunderer's praise My heart and voice with eager tribute paid. Lov'd cell! with tearful songs I shall lament thee. With moaning breast I shall regret thy charms; No more thy poet's lay thy shades will cheer, No more will Homer or thy Flaccus hail thee; No more my boys beneath thy roof will sing, But unknown hands thy solitudes possess. Thus sudden fades the glory of the age, Thus all things vanish in perpetual change. Naught rests eternal or immutable: The gloomy night obscures the sacred day; The chilling winter plucks fair autumn's flowers; The mournful storm the placid sea confounds;

CHAP.

Pomiferis redolent ramis tua claustra per hortos, Lilia cum rosulis candida mixta rubris. Omne genus volucrum matutinas personat odas Atque Creatorem laudat in ore deum. In te personuit quondam vox alma magistri, Quæ sacrosophiæ tradidit ore libros. In te temporibus certis laus sancta tonantis Pacificos sonuit vocibus atque animis. Te mea cella modo lacrymosis plango camœnis, Atque gemens casus pectore plango tuos. Tu subito quoniam fugisti carmina satum, Atque ignota manus te modo tota tenet. Te modo nec Flaccus nec fatis Homerus habebit Nec pueri Musas per tua tecta canunt. Vertitur omne decus secli sic namque repente, Omnia mutantur ordinibus variis. Nil manet æternum, nil immutabile vere est, Obscurat sacrum nox tenebrosa diem. Decutit et flores subito hyems frigida pulcros Perturbat placidum et tristior aura mare.

BOOK IX. Youth chases wild the palpitating stag,
While age incumbent totters on its staff.
Ah! wretched we! who love thee, fickle world!
Thou flyest our grasp and hurriest us to ruin.

ONE of Alcuin's fancies in versification was to close his second line with half of the first:

Præsul amate precor, hac tu diverte viator Sis memor Albini ut, præsul amate precor. 42

THERE are several poems, some short, others longer, in this kind of composition.

Many of Alcuin's poems are worthy of a perusal. Some exhibit the flowers of poetry, and some attempt tenderness and sensibility with effect. They are all distinguished by an easy and flowing versification. Several poems are addressed to his pupil Charlemagne, and mention him under the name of David, with a degree of affection which seldom approaches the throne. The adulation of a courtly poet, however, sometimes appears very gross, as in these lines, in which, alluding to Charlemagne's love of poetry, he ventures to address him by the venerable name of the Chian bard:

Dulcis Homere vale, valeat tua vita per ævum, Semper in æternum dulcis Homere vale.

Quæ campis cervos agitabat sacra juventus
Incumbit fessos nunc baculo senior.

Nos miseri cur te fugitivum mundus amamus?

Tu fugis a nobis semper ubique ruens..

Alb. Opera. ed. Du Ch. p. 1731.

12 Ibid. p. 1740.

This appears in the same poem with two other CHAP. childish lines:

Semper ubique vale, dic, dic, dulcissime David, David amor Flacci, semper ubique vale. 43

One of his poems consists of six stanzas, each of six lines. The two first are quoted, because this poem is very like one of the most common modes of versifying in the Anglo-Saxon poetry:

Te homo laudet, Alme Creator. Pectore mente. Pacis amore. Non modo parva, Pars quia mundi est. Sed tibi sancte Solus imago, Magna Creator, Mentis in arce Pectore puro Dum pie vivit. 44

Of the other Latin poetry of the Anglo-Saxons, little need be said. We have a few fragments of some authors, but they deserve a small degree of consideration. Malmsbury has preserved to us part of a poem made on Athelstan, probably by a contemporary, of which the only curiosity is, that it is a mixture of final rhimes and middle rhimes. Where the poet ceases to rhime at the end of his lines, he proceeds to rhime in the middle; and where he desists from middle rhimes, he inserts his final ones. 45

- 43 Alb. Opera. ed. Du Ch. p. 1742, 1743. 44 Ib. p. 780.
- 45 The twelve first lines may be quoted as a specimen: Regia progenies produxit nobile stemma Cum tenebris nostris illuxit splendida gemma, Magnus Æthelstanus patriæ decus, orbita recti, Illustris probitas de vero nescia flecti.

BOOK IX.

THERE is some poetry on Edgar preserved by Ethelwerd ⁴⁶; and the Vedastne MS. of the life of Dunstan contains some rhiming lines. ⁴⁷

Ad patris edictum datus in documenta scholarum,
Extimuit rigidos ferula crepitante magistros:
Et potans avidis doctrinæ mella medullis
Decurrit teneros, sed non pueriliter annos
Mox adolescentis vestitus fiore juventæ
Armorum studium tractabat, patre jubente.
Sed nec in hoc segnem senserunt bellica jura
Idquoque posterius juravit publica cura.

Malms. lib. ii. p. 49.

46 Ethelw. lib. iv. c. 9.

47 Acta Sanct. May.

CHAP. VI.

Of the general Literature of the Anglo-Saxons.

THAT every nation improves as fast as the CHAP. means and causes of improvement within VI. it, and the external agencies that are operating upon it can effect or allow, all anterior history proves; but the modes and paths of the progress of each country will be as different as its circumstances are dissimilar: in one age or state some directions will be taken peculiar to itself, and distinct from those of its predecessors or contemporaries. In their paths of excellence it may be pausing, but it will be found to be forcing other channels of its own. The movement is always either preparation for advance, or a diffusion of attained improvements, or clear and steady progression. If its career seems on some points to be questionable, or retrograde, it will, on a more scrutinising examination, be found to be decided and prosperous in others.

The Anglo-Saxon nation is an instance that may be adduced in verification of these principles. It did not attain a general or striking eminence in literature. But society wants other blessings besides these. The agencies that affected our ancestry took a different course: they im-

BOOK pelled them towards that of political melioration, the great fountain of human improvement; and, during the period of the Anglo-Saxon dynasty, laid firmly the foundations of that political constitution, and began the erection of that great social fabric, which Danes and Normans afterwards did not overthrow, but contributed to consolidate and complete.

THERE were no causes in action of sufficient energy at that time to make the Anglo-Saxons a literary people. They had not, like the Gauls or Britons, the benefit of Roman instruction to educate them; for both the Roman legions and settlers had quitted the island before they came. From the Britons they could gain nothing, because, assailing them as invaders, and either enslaving or exterminating them, there was no chance of any sympathy of mental cultivation. Nor were the Britons much qualified to have been their intellectual teachers. Luxury, civil factions, merciless wars with each other, and the Scotch and Irish depredations, were fast barbarising the island, while the Saxons were fighting for its occupation. The songs of the British bards were engrossed by encomiums on martial slaughter, drunken carousals, or the mystical traditions of expiring Druidism, in which but a few gleams of intelligent thought were at any time intermixed. Their historical events were twisted into the strange form of unnatural triads; and though they possessed many adages of moral wisdom and acute and satirical ob-

servation of life and manners; yet aphorisms CHAP. without reasoning are but the sentences of a *dictator, which impress the memory without cultivating the understanding; and even these could rarely benefit the Saxons, from the extreme dissimilarity to their own, of the language in which they were preserved. Hence, till Gregory planted Christianity in England, there was no means or causes of intellectual improvement to our fierce and active ancestors.

But Christianity was necessarily taught at first as a system of belief of certain doctrines, and of practice of certain rites and duties. The length of time requisite to inculcate and imbibe these left no opportunity for the diffusion of literature. The monks from Rome introduced some; but they had not only to bring it into the island, but to raise among the Anglo-Saxons the state of mind and capacity requisite to understand it, as well as the desire to attain it. No effects can take place without adequate causes. It was only among the monasteries that the new taste could be at first introduced, and among that part of the nation which devoted itself to religion. The rest neither felt the want of it, nor the value, nor had the leisure or the means of attending to it. The great majority of the population was in the working or servile state; and husbandry being imperfectly understood or practised, too much labour was required to raise the produce they needed, and too little was obtained, with all their efforts, to

BOOK give that leisure and comfort without which no nation or individual will study. The higher classes being all independent, and either assail. ing or depredating on others, or watching and defending themselves, or pursuing their vindictive feuds, or attending their kings and chiefs in expeditions, witena-gemots, and festivities, or employing their time in learning the use of arms, or in pilgrimages, penances, and superstitions, or attending county and baronial courts, performing suit of service, and transacting that frequent civil business of life which their free institutions were always creating, had as little surplus leisure for the cultivation of literature as the vassal, peasant, or the interior domestic. Their dependent jurisdictions and franchises furnished also their thegas, or barons, with continual employment. The clergy only were accessible to it; and these were, as a body, too poor to have books from which to learn it, and in their parochial villages had neither inducement nor opportunities to gain it. It was into the monasteries only that, under the circumstances of the day, the liberal studies could make any entrance. Nor at first even here. The monks were long occupied in building their churches and cloisters, and putting their ground into a state of cultivation, and of raising from it the means of subsistence. Most of them for some time could barely do this. It was only as some became gradually affluent that they could afford to purchase manuscripts, or were at leisure to

study them. Literature was not then generally CHAP. wanted for preferment, business, distinction, occupation, or amusement in the world. There was too much for all classes to do and suffer. But as the more favoured monasteries acquired wealth, libraries, and leisure, some few individuals began to derive enjoyment from literature; and as fast as the means of obtaining it accrued, the taste and pursuit of it arose and was diffused. The neglect of it did not proceed from the barbarism or incapacity of the Anglo-Saxon mind, but from its energies being necessarily absorbed by more indispensable occupations. Our ancestors were clever and active men in all the transactions and habits of their day, and were exerting in all their concerns as much awakened intellect as their gross system. of feeding and habits of drinking permitted to be developed. We have estimated them too low, because we have too highly appreciated the general condition of Roman society, and too much compared our forefathers with ourselves,

I observe a passage in Bede which shows that even the Anglo-Saxon clergy made their literature subservient to their business. He says, "I have known many clerical placed in school, for this chiefly, that they might acquire a knowledge of secular letters, which teach their auditors most studiously to seek carnal things; to contend for obtaining the glory of the world; and to learn the subtleties of syllogisms and arguments, that they may triumph over the unlearned, who are circumvented with a verbosity of this sort." Again, "as many scholars exercise themselves in secular letters for the love of secular life, so I shall exercise myself in sacred letters." Bed. Op. vol. viii. p. 1063, 1064.

BOOK Absence of literature has been too often mistaken for absence of intellect. It is usually forgotten that illiteracy has been the general character of the mass of all people, whether Egyptian, Phœnician, Greek, or Roman, as much as of the Goths or Anglo-Saxons. In the most celebrated countries of antiquity it was a portion only, and that but a small one, of their population which possessed either books or literature. It is only in our own times that these are becoming the property of nations at large. When our Anglo-Saxons applied to literature they showed the strength of their intellectual powers, and a rapidity of progress that has never been surpassed. Bede, Alcuin, and Erigena may be compared with any of the Roman or Greek authors who appeared after the third century. But that within an hundred years after knowledge, for the first time, dawned upon the Anglo-Saxons, such a man as Bede should have arisen, writing so soundly on every branch of study that had been pursued by the Romans, and forming in his works a kind of cyclopedia of almost all that was then known, is a phenomenon which it is easier to praise than to parallel.

THE natural direction of the Anglo-Saxon mind, when first led to study, was necessarily to religious literature, because its tuition and its tutors were of this description. To attain knowledge it was requisite that our ancestors should become acquainted with the Latin language; and this was the first state of their in- CHAP. tellectual progress.

WHEN St. Augustin had entered England teaching Christianity, the pope sent to him many books, some of which are now extant in our public libraries. This missionary, and the monks who accompanied him, occasioned a desire of knowledge to spread among the Anglo-Saxons in the seventh century. In a short time afterwards, Sigebert, one of the princes of East Anglia, imbibed this feeling during his residence in France, to which he had fled from his brother Redwald. When he attained the crown of East Anglia, he established a school in his dominions for the instruction of youth, in imitation of those which he had seen among the Franks. He was assisted in this happy effort of civilisation by bishop Felix, who came to him out of Kent, and who supplied him with teachers from that part of the octarchy which Christianity and literature had first enlightened.

At this period Ireland was distinguished for its religious literature; and many of the Anglo-Saxons, both of the higher and lower ranks, retired into it to pursue their studies or their devotions. While some assumed the monastic life, others, seeking variety of knowledge, went from one master's cell to another. The hospitable Irish received them all, supplied them

³ Bede, iii. 18.

IX.

BOOK with daily food, with books, and gratuitous instruction, 3

> Many persons in England are mentioned at this time by Bede as reading and studying the Holy Scriptures. To the Anglo-Saxons, as to all nations, the Jewish and Christian Scriptures must have been invaluable accessions. From these we learn the most rational chronology of the earth, the most correct history of the early states of the East, the most intelligent piety, the wisest morality, and every style of literary composition. Perhaps no other collection of human writings can be selected which, in so moderate a compass, presents so much intellectual benefit to mankind. We shall feel all their value and importance to our ancestors, if we compare them with the Edda, in which the happiest efforts of the Northern genius are deposited.4

> It has been mentioned, that Alfred lamented very impressively the happy times which England had known before his reign, and the wisdom, knowledge, and books, which then abounded.

> THE period of intellectual cultivation to which he alluded began to dawn when Christianity was first planted; but was advanced to its meridian lustre towards the end of the seventh century,

³ Bede, iii. c. 28.

⁴ No one who has read them can put the Koran, the Vedas, the Puranas, or the Zendavesta, in competition with the Scriptures, unless he has that unfortunate taste for comparative nonsense, which we should lament, rather than censure.

by two ecclesiastics, whom the pope sent into CHAP. England.

About the year 668, the English archbishop, who went to Rome for the papal sanction, happening to die there, the pope resolved to supply his dignity by a person of his own choice. He selected for this purpose Adrian, an abbot of a monastery near Naples, and an African. The unambitious Adrian declined the honour, and recommended Theodore, a monk at Rome, but a native of Tarsus, the Grecian city illustrious by the birth of St. Paul. The pope approved his choice, and at the age of sixty-six Theodore was ordained archbishop of Canterbury. His friend Adrian accompanied him to England.

Nothing could be more fortunate for the Anglo-Saxon literature than the settlement of these men in England. Both were well versed in sacred and profane literature, and thoroughly acquainted with the Greek and Latin languages. Their conversation and exhortations excited among the Anglo-Saxons a great emulation for literary studies. A crowd of pupils soon gathered round them, and, besides the Scriptures and divinity, they taught the Greek and Latin languages, astronomy, arithmetic, and the art of Latin poetry. ⁵ A remarkable instance of the

Anglo-Saxons pronounced Greek, in their manner of repeating the Lord's prayer in that language. In the Cotton Library a MS. has preserved this prayer in the Greek language written in Saxon characters. It is probably a correct

BOOK natural affinity of the human mind for knowledge, and of the contagious sympathy with which it always spreads when neither the civil nor ecclesiastical powers oppose it.

> THEODORE held his archiepiscopal station twenty-one years. He appointed Adrian to the monastery of St. Peter at Canterbury, who lived there thirty-nine years; and their presence made Kent the fountain of knowledge to all the rest of England. Bede extols the happy times which the island enjoyed under their tuition, and mentions that some of their scholars were alive in his time as well versed in the Greek and Latin tongues as in their own. 6

Among the men to whom Anglo-Saxon lite-

example of the pronunciation of Greek as introduced into England by Adrian and Theodore in the seventh century; but it certainly shows, in the division of the words, how little the writer understood of the language. I will transcribe it, placing the original by its side:

Pater imon oynys uranis agiastituto onomansu, elthetu ebasilias genithito to theli mansu. os senu uranu Keptasgis tonartonimon., tonepiussion. dos simin simero Keaffi simin. to offilemata imon oskeimis affiomen, tus ophiletas mon Kemies ininkis imas. isperas mon. ala ryse imas aptou poniru. - MS. Cott. Lib. Galba, A. 18. The character which I express by the K seems placed for Kal.

6 Bede, iv. c. 2.

Πάτερ ήμων ὁ ἐν τοῖς ἐρανοίς. άγιασθήτω τὸ "νομά σου. Έλθέτω ή βασιλεία σε γενηθήτω το θέλημά σε, ώς ἐν ἐρανῶ, καὶ έωὶ της γης. Τὸν ἄςτον ήμῶν, τὸν ἐπιέσιον δός ημίν σήμερον. Καὶ ἄφες ημίν τὰ ὁΦειληματα ήμῶν, ῶς καὶ ήμεις εθίεμεν τοις οθειλέταις ήμων. Καὶ μη εἰσενέγκης ήμας είς πειρασμόν, αλλά όῦσαι ήμας שמש עם מסוחם בי

rature was greatly indebted, Benedict, who CHAP. founded the abbey at Weremouth, must be mentioned with applause. He went several times from England to Rome, and brought back with him an innumerable quantity of books of every description, given to him by his friends, or purchased at no small expence. One of his last instructions was to keep with care the library that he had collected, and not to let it be spoilt or scattered by negligence. The importance of his attention to the arts is also noticed.

EGBERT, who was archbishop of York in 712, had celebrity in his day. He was descended from the royal family of Northumbria, and is highly extolled by Malmsbury as an armoury of all the liberal arts. He founded a very noble library at York. Alcuin speaks with gratitude of this circumstance. "Give me (says he in a letter to Charlemagne) those exquisite books of erudition which I had in my own country by the good and devout industry of my master Egbert, the archbishop." To this Egbert, our Bede addresses a long letter, which remains. We have one treatise of Egbert remaining. It is a series of answers to some ecclesiastical questions.

WILFRID was another benefactor to Anglo-Saxon literature, by favouring the collection of books. He also ordered the four Evangelists to

⁷ Bede, Hist. Abb. 293-295.

BOOK be written, of purest gold, on purple-coloured parchments, for the benefit of his soul, and he had a case made for them of gold, adorned with precious stones.9

> WE have a catalogue of the books in the library at York, collected chiefly by Egbert. They consisted of the following

Ancient fathers: -

Jerom. Hilarius. Ambrosius, Austin, Athanasius. Gregory, Leo.

Fulgentius, Basil. Chrisostom. Lactantius. Eutychius, Clemens. Paulinus.

Ancient classics: -

Aristotle. Cicero. Virgil, Statius.

Lucan, Boetius. Cassiodorus. Orosius. Pompeius.

Ancient grammarians and scholiasts: --

Probus. Donatus. Priscian.

Servius, Pompeius, Comminianus.

Other poets: -

Victorinus. Sedulius. Juvencus.

Fortunatus 10, Prosper, Arator.

This was the library which Alcuin calls the treasures of wisdom which his beloved master Egbert left, and of which he says to Charle-

⁹ Eddius, Vita Wilf.

magne, "If it shall please your wisdom, I will CHAP. send some of our boys, who may copy from thence whatever is necessary, and carry back into France the flowers of Britain; that the garden may not be shut up in York, but the fruits of it may be placed in the Paradise of Tours."

The studies which were pursued at York may be also stated, as those which they who cultivated literature generally attended to.

THEY were,

Grammar, Rhetoric, Poetry, Astronomy, and Natural Philosophy;

which are thus described: -

"The harmony of the sky, the labour of the sun and moon, the five zones, the seven wandering planets. The laws, risings, and setting of the stars; and the aerial motions of the sea, earthquakes; the natures of man, cattle, birds, and wild beasts; their various species and figures. The sacred Scriptures." 12

THESE were the subjects of the scholastic education at York in the eighth century.

But though literature in the seventh and eighth centuries was striking its roots into every part of England, yet, from the causes already noticed, it was principally in the monasteries. The illiteracy of the secular part of society continued. Even some of our kings were unable to write. Wihtred, king of Kent, about the year 700, says at the end of a charter, "I have

¹¹ Malmsb. i. 24-26.

BOOK put the sign of the holy cross pro ignorantia litterarum 13, on account of my ignorance of writing." Among the kings of the seventh and eighth century, however, some exceptions appear. There are several letters extant from the Anglo-Saxon kings at this period 14 which show some mental cultivation. Of these sovereigns, none were more distinguished than Alfred, of Northumbria, whose voluntary exile in Ireland for the sake of study, and whose literary attainments and celebrity, we have already recorded. 15 But the improvements of those who sought ecclesiastical duties must have operated with considerable effect on all who were within the circle of their influence. They mingled with every order of society; they were every where respected, and often emulated.

From among the Anglo-Saxon students in the century preceding Alfred the Great, we may select for our peculiar notice, as best illustrating the literary progress of the nation, Aldhelm. Bede, and Alcuin.

Aldhelm.

ALDHELMUS, as he calls himself in his Latin poems, or, as Alfred spells it, Ealdhelm. 16 Old Helmet, whose poems we have noticed before, was of princely extraction. A kinsman of Ina was his father. He received his first tuition from the Adrian already noticed, and he con-

¹³ Astle's Charters, No. 1.

¹⁴ See Mag. Bib. Pat. xvi. 64, 82, 83, 88.

^{.35} See our First Vol. p. 386.

²⁶ Alfred's Bede, v. c. 18.

tinued his studies at Malmsbury, where Mail- CHAP. dulf, an Irishman, had founded a monastery.

He became thoroughly versed in Greek and Latin under this tutor, who, charmed by the sylvan beauties of the place, led an hermit's life there, and supported himself by teaching scholars. He returned to Kent, and resumed his studies under Adrian, till his feverish state of health compelled him to relinquish them. He mentions some of these circumstances in a kind letter to his old preceptor.'7

"I confess, my dearest, whom I embrace with the tenderness of pure affection, that when, about three years ago, I left your social intercourse and withdrew from Kent, my littleness still was inflamed with an ardent desire for your society. I should have thought of it again, as it is my wish to be with you, if the course of things and the change of time would have suffered me; and if divers obstacles had not prevented me. The same weakness of my corporeal infirmity boiling within my emaciating limbs, which formerly compelled me to return home, when, after the first elements, I had rejoined you again, still delays me."

In another letter he expresses his love of study, and mentions the objects to which his attention was directed. These were the Roman jurisprudence, the metres of Latin poetry, arithmetic, astronomy, and its superstitious child, astrology.¹⁸

HE became abbot of Malmsbury, and his government was distinguished by the numerous

¹⁷ Alfred's Bede, v. c. 18. Malms. de Pont. 3 Gale, 338.

³ Gale, 338. Henry has given almost the whole of it in his history, vol. iv. p. 14.

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and splendid donations of land with which the great men of his time endowed his monastery. In 705 he was made bishop of Sherborn, and in 709 he died.

It is amusing to read the miracles that were ascribed to him. A beam of wood was once lengthened by his prayers; the ruins of the church he built, though open to the skies, were never wet with rain during the worst weather; one of his garments, when at Rome, once raised itself high in the air, and was kept there a while self-suspended; a child nine days old, at his command, once spake to clear the calumniated pope from the imputation of being its ¹⁹ father. Such were the effusions of monastic fancy which our ancestors were once enamoured to read and eager to believe.

WE will now pass on to his literary character. HE, while abbot, addressed a letter to Geraint, king of Cornwall, whom he styles "the most glorious lord governing the sceptre of the western kingdom," on the subject of the proper day of celebrating Easter, which yet "exists; but which has nothing in it to deserve further notice. He addressed a learned book to Alfred, the intelligent king of Northumbria, on the dignity of the number 7, on paternal charity, on the nature of insensible things which

^{19 3} Gale, 351.

^{20 16} Mag. Bib. Pat. p. 65.

are used in metaphors, on the rules of prosody, CHAP. on the metres of poetry. 21

ALDHELM was highly estimated by Malmsbury, in the twelfth century, who places him above both Bede and Alcuin. Bede, his contemporary, described him as a man in every respect most learned; neat in his style, and wonderfully skilled in secular and ecclesiastical literature. Alfred translates Bede's nitidus in sermone into 'on wordum hluttor and scinende,' clear and shining in his words. Malmsbury closes his panegyric on his style with asserting, that from its acumen you would think it to be Greek; from its splendor, Roman; and from its pomp, English. After these lavish commendations, it will be necessary to consider of their applicability.

His letter to Eahfrid contains a most elaborate specimen of Latin alliteration. Fifteen words begin with the same letter in the first paragraph.

"Primitus (pantorum procerum pretorumque pio potissimum paternoque præsertim privilegio) panegyricum poemata que passim prosatori sub polo promulgantes stridula vocum symphonia ac melodiæ cantilenæque carmine modulaturi hymnizenus."

In the same letter we have afterwards "torrenda tetræ tortionis in tartara trusit." The

^{33 \$} Gale, 339.

²³ 3 Gale, 342.

²³ Alfred's Bede, v. 18

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whole epistle exhibits a series of bombastic amplification.²⁴

His treatise in praise of virginity is his principal prose work, and is praised by Malmsbury for its rhetorico lepore. It is unfortunate for human genius, that the taste and judgment of mankind vary in every age, and that so defective are our criterions of literary merit, that even in the same age there are nearly as many critical opinions as there are individuals who assume a right to judge. Some things, however, please more permanently and more universally than others; and some kinds of merit, like that of Aldhelm, are only adapted to flourish at a particular period.

This singular treatise contains a profusion of epithets, new-created words, paraphrases, and repetitions, conveyed in long and intricate periods. He clouds his meaning by his gorgeous rhetoric. ²⁵ Never content with illustrating his sentiment by an adapted simile, he is perpetually abandoning his subject to pursue his imagery. He illustrates his illustrations till he has forgotten both their meaning and applicability. Hence his style is an endless tissue of figures, which he never leaves till he has converted

³⁴ Usher Syll, Hib. Ep. p. 37.

²⁵ Yet its editor, Henry Wharton, in 1693, praises its eximiam elegantiam. Aldhelm addresses it to several religious ladies, his friends; as Hildelitha, Justina, Cuthberga, Osburga, Aldgida, Hidburga, Burrigida, Eulalia, Scholastica, and Tecla. S. I.

every metaphor into a simile, and every simile chap. into a wearisome episode. In an age of general ignorance, in which the art of criticism was unknown, his diction pleased and informed by its magnificent exuberance. His imagery was valued for its minuteness, because, although usually unnecessary to its subject, and to us disgusting, as a mere mob of rhetorical figures, yet, as these long details contained considerable information for an uncultivated mind, and sometimes presented pictures which, in a poem might not have been uninteresting 26, it was read with curiosity and praised with enthusiasm.

That the style of Aldhelm's prose work is the injudicious adoption of the violent metaphors and figures of northern poetry, so like the swollen style of modern Persia, the following instances, but a sample of several pages of the book, will show; we have not only,

"The golden necklace of the virtues; the white jewels of merit; the purple flowers of modesty; the transparent eyeballs of virginal bashfulness; the grapes of iniquity; the swan-like hoariness of age; the shrubbery of pride; the torrid cautery of the dogmas, the phlebotomy of the Divine Word; Unbarring the folding doors of dumb taciturnity; the helmet of grammar; the tenacious knot of memory; the importunate dragon of gluttony; the shining lamps of chastity burning

²⁶ It frequently digresses into such descriptions as this: -

[&]quot;The various-coloured glory of the peacock excels in the perfect rotundity of its circles. Beauty in its feathers at one time assumes a saffron tinge; at another glows with purple grace: it now shines in cerulean blue, and now radiates like the yellow gold."

BOOK

with the oil of modesty; the plenteous plantations of the apple-tree fecundating the mind with flourishing leaf; and the fetid sink of impurity lamentably overwhelming the ships of the soul,"—

But we have also long paragraphs of confused figures. —

"O illustrious grace of virginity, which as a rose rises from twigs of briars, reddens with a purple flower, and never putrifies in the dire decay of mortality, although it is tied to the weary frailness of death, and grows old with down-bending and crooked age."—

"The leaky bark of our feeble ingenuity, shaken by the whirlwind of a dire tempest, may attain late its port of silence by laborious rowing of the arms, yet we trust that the sails of our yards, swelling with the blasts of every wind, will, notwithstanding their broken cables, navigate happily between the Scyllas of solecism and the gulph of barbarism, dreading the rocky collisions of vain glory and the incautious whirlpools of self-love."—

"Resembling the industry of the most sagacious bees, which, when the dewy dawn appears, and the beams of the most limpid sun arise, pour the thick armies of their dancing crowds from the temple over the open fields; now lying in the honey-bearing leaves of the marigolds, or in the purple flowers of the mallows, they suck the nectar drop by drop with their beaks; now flying round the yellowing willows and purplish tops of the broom, they carry their plunder on numerous thighs and burthened legs, from which they make their waxen castles: now crowding about the round berries of the ivy, and the light springs of the flourishing linden tree, they construct the multiform machine of their honeycombs with angular and open cells, whose artificial structure the excellent poet with natural eloquence has sung in catalectic verse. So, unless I mistake, your memorising ingenuity of mind, in like manner wandering through the flourishing fields of letters runs with a bibulous curiosity." 27

²⁷ Dr. Parr has condescended, in our own days, to give us "the battering ram of political controversies." But Ald-

EVERY page exhibits some strong effusions of CHAP. fancy and high poetical feeling, but overloading their subjects; frequently inapplicable; never placed with taste, nor limited by judgment, nor singly and distinctly used. The whole is a confused medley of great and exuberant genius, wasting and burlesqueing uncommon powers. 28

THE celebrated Bede, surnamed the Vener-Bede. able 29, was a priest in the monastery at Weremouth, in the kingdom of Northumbria. His simple life will be best told in his own unaffected narration. He was born in 673.

"Born in the territory of the same monastery, when I was seven years of age, I was, by the care of my relation, com-

helm preceded him with the figure: "the bulwark of the Catholic faith, shaken by the balistæ of secular argument, and overthrown by the battering rams of atrocious ingenuity." S. 56.

²⁸ His encomiastical periphrasis on the Virgin, though placed as prose, seems meant to rhime. It is in the same rhetorical style. He says that she,

Beata Maria
Virgo perpetua;
Hortus conclusus,
Fons signatus:
Virgula radicis:
Gerula floris:
Aurora solis:
Nurus patris.
Genetrix et Germa

Genetrix et Germana Filii simul que sponsa; Sanctarum socrus animarum, Supernorum regina civium — — Obsidem seculi,

Monarcham mundi, Rectorem poli; Redemptorem soli;

Archangelo promentrante, Paracleto adumbrante;

S. 40.

deserved to be expatiated upon.

²⁹ They who desire to know when the name Venerable was applied to Bede, may consult the Appendix to Smith's Bede, p. 106.

IX.

BOOK mitted to the reverend Abbot Benedict to be educated, and then to Ceolfrid. I passed all the time of my life in the residence of this monastery, and gave all my labours to the meditation of the Scriptures, and to the observance of regular discipline, and the daily care of singing in the church. It was always sweet to me to learn to teach and to write.

> "In my 19th year I was made deacon; in my 30th, a priest; both by the ministry of the most reverend bishop John, by the direction of the abbot Ceolfrid.

> " From the time of my receiving the order of priesthood to the 59th year of my life, I have employed myself in briefly noting from the works of the venerable fathers these things on the Holy Scriptures for the necessities of me and mine, and in adding something to the form of their sense and interpretation."

THE works which he then enumerates are.

"Commentaries on most of the books of the Old and New Testament, and the Apocrypha.

Two books of Homilies.

A book of Letters to different Persons; one on the Six Ages - on the Tabernacles of the Children of Israel - on a passage in Isaiah - on the Bissextile - on the Equinox according to Anatolius.

The Life and Passion of St. Felix the Confessor, translated into prose from the metrical work of Paulinus.

The Life and Passion of St. Anastasius, corrected from a had translation of the Greek.

The Life of St. Cuthbert, in verse and prose.

The History of the Abbots, Benedict, Ceolfrid, and Huaetberct.

The Ecclesiastical History of England.

A Martyrology.

A book of Hymns in various metre or rhythm.

A book of Epigrams in heroic or elegiac metre.

Book on the Nature of Things and Times.

Another book on Times.

A book on Orthography.

A book on the Metrical Art.

And a book on the Tropes and Figures used in Scripture." 30

Besides these works, Bede wrote others, on CHAP. Grammar, Arithmetic, Music, Astronomy, and Astrology.

His theological works occupy nearly six folio volumes out of eight. He has commented on every book of the Scriptures, from Genesis to the Revelations, and he introduces on each as much learning and knowledge as any one individual could then, by the most patient research, accumulate.

His treatise on the Trinity is a commentary on the tract of Boethius on that subject. His homilies and sermons occupy the seventh volume. His meditations on the last words of our Saviour, display great devotional sensibility.

ALL his remarks show a calm and clear good sense, a straight-forward mind, occasionally misled to imitate or adopt many of the allegorical interpretations of the Greek fathers, but usually judging soundly. They evince a most extensive reading, and presented his age with the best selections from the best authors on the passages which he expounds.

His moral taste and wisdom appears in his excellent selection of moral sentences from the works of the ancients. He has collected all that was known of the theory and practice of chronology, of natural philosophy, of the popular part of astronomy, and of the theory and practice of music, the laws of Latin prosody, the

BOOK chief topics of grammar, rhetoric, and arithmetic 31, and the main facts and dates of general history. 32 His calculations for the calendar are very elaborate; his treatise on blood-letting displays some of the universal superstitions of his countrymen as to proper days and times 33, and in another work, he tells us that trees ought to be cut in the third week of the moon, or they will be corroded by worms 34; but it is St. Ambrose, not himself, who is responsible for this fancy. He states of the tides that they followed the moon, and that, as the moon rises and sets every day four-fourths or four-fifths of an hour later than the preceding, so do the tides ebb and flow with a similar retardation. 35

> THE style of Bede in all his works is plain and unaffected. Attentive only to his matter, he had little solicitude for the phrase in which he dressed it. But though seldom eloquent, and often homely, it is clear, precise, and useful. His treatise on the Six Ages gives a regular series of Jewish chronology, and then of general

³r In his tract on arithmetic, p. 104, he gives the Mensa Pythagorica, which is in fact, the multiplication table, invested with so proud a title. His notation is the Roman. He says, that what the Latins called numerus, and the Hebrews nonna, the Macedonians named calculus, from the little stones which they held in their hands when they reckoned, p. 113. Hence our calculation.

³² Bede also teaches the indigitatio, or the manner of telling and computing with the fingers, p. 167.

³⁴ Ib. vol. ii. p. 115. 33 Op. vol. i. p. 472.

³⁵ Op. vol. ii. p. 116.

chronology carried down to the year 729. His CHAP. History of England is the only contemporary document we have of the transactions of the Anglo-Saxon octarchy, and it furnishes us with many particulars not to be found elsewhere. His Lives of Religious Persons are disfigured with those legends which degrade his history; but as they were the object of general admiration and belief in his day, his credulity was the credulity of his age. His works poured an useful flood of matter for the exercise and improvement of the Anglo-Saxon mind, and collected into one focus all that was known to the ancient world, excepting the Greek mathematicians, and some of their literature and philosophy which he had not much studied. To have written them in such a period of ignorance with means so imperfect, displays an ardent intellect, unwearied in its exertions, and by their popularity among the clergy, contributed to diffuse a taste for literature, which other causes in due time matured. His life was of great importance to his age, in his scholars, for he educated four men, who greatly promoted literature in France in the following age. Alcuin, Claudius, Rabanus, and Erigena.

HE died in the year 735, and his death is thus described by his pupil Cuthbert,

"He was attacked with a severe infirmity of frequent, short His deathbreathing, yet without pain, about two weeks before Easter day; and so he continued joyful and glad, and giving thanks to Almighty God day and night, indeed hourly, till the day IX.

BOOK of Ascension. He gave lessons to us his disciples every day. and he employed what remained of the day in singing of psalms. The nights he passed without sleep, yet rejoicing and giving thanks, unless when a little slumber intervened. When he waked he resumed his accustomed devotions, and with expanded hands never ceased returning thanks to God. Indeed I never saw with my eyes nor heard with my ears any one so diligent in his grateful devotions. O truly blessed man! He sang the passage in St. Paul, 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God: and many other things from the Scripture, in which he admonished us to arouse ourselves from the sleep of the mind. He also recited something in our English language; for he was very learned in our songs; and, putting his thoughts into English verse, he spoke it with compunction. 'For this necessary journey no one can be more prudent than he ought to be, to think before his going hence what of good or evil his spirit after death will be judged worthy of.' He sang the Antiphonæ according to our custom and his own, of which one is, 'O King of Glory, Lord of virtues, leave us not orphans, but send the promise of the Father, the Spirit of Truth, upon us. Alleluia.' When he came to the words Spirit of Truth, he burst into tears, and wept much; and we with him. We read and wept again; indeed we always read in tears." After mentioning that he was occupied in translating St. John's Gospel into Saxon, his pupil adds - " When he came to the third festival before the Ascension Day, his breathing began to be very strongly affected, and a little swelling appeared in his feet. All that day he dictated cheerfully, and sometimes said, among other things, 'Make haste - I know not how long I shall last. My Maker may take me away very soon.' It seemed to us that he knew well he was near his end. He passed the night watching and giving thanks. When the morning dawned he commanded us to write diligently what we had begun. This being done, we walked till the third hour with the relics of the saints, as the custom of the day required. One of us was with him, who said, 'There is yet, beloved master, one chapter wanting; will it not be unpleasant to you to be asked any more questions?' he answered, ' Not at all; take your pen, prepare it, and write with speed.

He did so. At the ninth hour he said to me, 'I have some valuables in my little chest. But run quickly and bring the presbyters of our monastery to me, that I may distribute my small presents.'—He addressed each, and exhorted them to attend to their masses and prayers. They wept when he told them they would see him no more; but he said it was time that he should return to the Being who had formed him out of nothing. He conversed in this manner cheerfully till the evening, when the boy said, 'Dear master, one sentence is still wanting.' 'Write it quick,' exclaimed Bede. When it was finished, he said, 'Take my head in your hands, for I shall delight to sit opposite the holy place where I have been accustomed to pray, and where I can invoke my Father.' When he was placed on the pavement, he repeated the Gloria Patri, and expired in the effort." 36

Bede was very highly respected in his day. Boniface, whose life we shall next detail, asks for his works, and speaks of him as a man enriched by the divine grace with a spiritual intellect, and as irradiating his country. Pope Sergius wished his presence in Rome, for the benefit of his counsel.

Boniface, the Anglo-Saxon missionary, whose Boniface. Latin poems have been before alluded to, and who, in the eighth century founded the principal bishoprics, and the abbey of Fulda, and several monasteries in Germany, was born in Devonshire. His name was ³⁷ Winfrith. He calls himself German Legate of the Apostolic See ³⁸, and mentions that, "Born and nourished in the nation of the English, we wander here by the precept of the Apostolic Seat." ³⁹ From another letter, we find that he

³⁶ Smith's Bede, 793.

³⁷ Bon. Ep. 16 Mag. Bib. p. 71. 38 Ib. 51. 39 Ib. 52.

BOOK had visited Rome, to give an account of his IX. mission, and that the Pope had exhorted him to return and persevere in his efforts. 40 He was in the archiepiscopal dignity from 745 to 754. His activity was exerted with the greatest success between the Wezer and the Rhine. He anointed Pepin king of the Francs in 752. During his absence abroad he kept up an extensive correspondence in England. We have several of his letters to the kings of the Anglo-Saxon octarchy. He wrote to Ethelbald, king of Mercia, begging his assistance to the friend who carried his letter, and sending him some presents. To the same king he addressed a longer letter of moral rebuke and religious exhortation. Ethelbert, the king of Kent, sent to him a complimentary letter, mentioning his rumoured successes in the conversion of the Germans, and presenting him with a bowl of silver gilt. Sigebald, a king of the octarchy, wrote to him to request that he would be one of his bishops; and Æbuald, king of East Anglia, also addressed him in a very kind and respectful manner, 41

> His letters to Nothelm, archbishop of Canterbury, to the Anglo-Saxon bishops, Daniel and Ecberth, and to several abbots and abbesses, are yet preserved. His correspondence with the son of Charles Martel, with Pepin, king of France, and with the popes Gregory II. and III.,

⁴º Bon. Ep. 16 Mag. Bib. p. 60.

^{4&#}x27; See these letters, 16 Mag. Bib. Pat.

and Zachary, also exists. He appears to have CHAP. been a man of considerable attainments, of earnest piety, and the most active benevolence. His last Christian labours were in East Friesland, where he was killed with fifty companions. 42

EDDIUS, surnamed Stephanus, is described Eddius. by Bede 43, as the first singing master in the churches of Northumbria, and as having been invited from Kent by Wilfrid. He flourished about 720, and wrote the life of bishop Wilfrid: he addresses his work to bishop Acca and the abbot Tatbert. Eddius begins it with a ridiculous prodigy. While the mother of Wilfrid was in labour with him, the house where she lay seemed to those without to be in flames. The neighbours hastened with water to extinguish them. But the fire was not real; it was only a type of Wilfrid's future sanctity and honour. The miracles of his mature age were of course not less extraordinary. To restore a dead child to life, and to heal another with his arms and thighs broken by a fall from a scaffold; a dark dungeon supernaturally illuminated; St. Michael coming from heaven to cure him of a malady; a withered hand restored by

⁴² Three of the books that he had then with him are still preserved in the monastery of Fulda. The Gospels in his own hand-writing; an harmony of the New Testament; and a volume stained with his blood, containing a letter of Pope Leo, St. Ambrose, on the Holy Ghost, with his treatise de bono mortis, "on the advantage of death." Alb. Butler's Lives, vol. vi. p. 88.

⁴³ Bede, lib. iv. c. 2.

laid; an angel appearing with a golden cross to hinder his chamber from being burnt; are some of the effusions of Eddius's fancy, with which he feebly attempts to adorn his composition and

its object. 44

The style is not so plain as Bede, nor so affected as Aldhelm; but is seldom above mediocrity.

Alcuin.

One of the pupils formed by Bede, and who became the literary friend and preceptor of Charlemagne, Alcuin, called also Albinus, is entitled to the most honourable notice among the Saxon literati of the 8th century. He was born in Northumbria, and studied at York under Egbert. He says of himself, that he was nourished and educated at York 45, and that he went in his youth to Rome, and heard Peter of Pisa dispute on Christianity with a Jew.

HE was sent on an embassy from Offa to Charlemagne, and after this period the emperor was so highly attached to him, that in 790 he went to France, and settled there. Here he composed many works on the sciences and arts, which were valued in that day, for the use and instruction of Charlemagne. These still exist, and a number of letters and poems also appear in his works, addressed to Charlemagne, on a variety of topics, under the name of David, and written in the most affectionate language. He

⁴⁴ See his Life of Wilfrid, in 3 Gale Scrip. p. 40:

⁴⁵ Malmsb. de Gest. Reg. p. 24.

was indefatigable in exciting the emperor to the CHAP. love and encouragement of learning, and in the collection of MSS. for its dissemination. His efforts spread it through France, and his reputation contributed much to establish it in Europe. After the enjoyment of imperial affection and confidence to a degree which literature has never experienced in any other instance, he retired to the abbey of Saint Martin, at Tours, where he died in 804.46

HE attained great affluence from the favour of his imperial friend. He remarks that a Spanish ecclesiastic, whose erring opinions he had censured, blamed him for the multitude of his riches, and for the number of his servi or bondsmen, being 20,000. Alcuin does not contradict the fact, but denies that it had corrupted his mind: "It is one thing to possess the world; it is another to be possessed by it." 47

HE seems to have been much afflicted with illness, for he often mentions his head-achs, the daily pains of his weak body, and a species of continual fever. 48

THE merit of Alcuin's poetry we have already

⁴⁶ See his works, published by Du Chesne, at Paris, in 1617.

⁴⁷ Alb. Op. p. 927.

⁴⁸ Op. p. 1505—1511.; and "the wicked fever scarcely, scarcely suffers me to live on earth. It seeks to open for me the road to heaven. Health leads me to seek its precious treasures amid the fields, and hills, and verdant meadows." P. 1509.

BOOK exhibited. His prose is entitled to the praise of learning, eloquence, and more judgment than any of his contemporaries exhibited. He had a correct and high feeling of morals and piety; his taste was of an improved kind, and his mind was clear and acute. But it must be recollected of him, as of all the writers of the Anglo-Saxon period, that their greatest merit consisted in acquiring, preserving, and teaching the knowledge which other countries and times had accumulated. They added little to the stock themselves. They left it as they found it. But they separated its best parts from the words and lumber with which these were connected, and thus prepared the ground for further improvement; and their efforts, examples, and tuition contributed to excite the taste, and to diffuse the acquisition. Unless such men had existed, the knowledge, which the talents of mankind had been for ages slowly acquiring, would have gradually mouldered away with the few perishing MSS. which contained it. Europe would have become what Turkey is, and mankind would have been now slowly emerging into the infancy of literature and science, instead of rejoicing in that noble manhood which we have attained. Several Irish ecclesiastics at this time attained eminence, and assisted to instruct both France and Italy. Of these Claudius, also a disciple of Bede, and friend of Albinus, Dungal and Duncan were the most conspicuous. All these were patronised by Charlemagne.

ANOTHER disciple of Bede, and one of the CHAP. literary companions of Alfred, Johannes Erigena, or John the Irishman, was distinguished Erigena. by the acumen of his intellect and the expanse of his knowledge. Though a native of the West of Europe, he was well skilled in Grecian literature 49, for he translated from the Greek language a work of Dionysius, called the Areopagite 5°, and the Scholia of Maximus, on Gregory the theologian. 51 He dedicated this last work to Charles, the French king, at whose command. he had undertaken both. 52 At the request of

49 Bouquet, in his recueil of the ancient French chronicles, says, that after Charlemagne had obtained the Empire of the West, and an epistolary intercourse had taken place between the Franks and Greeks, "Cepit occidentalibus nosci et in usu esse lingua Græca." T. viii. p. 107.

50 That the works ascribed to Dionysius, the Areopagite, are supposititious, and were written after the fourth century, see Dupin, vol. i. p. 100-111. ed. Paris, 1688. They suited the genius of Erigena, for their "principal but est de parler des mysteres d'une maniere curieuse et recherchée, de les expliquer suivant les principes de la philosophie de Platon et en des termes platoniciens," p. 104.

51 This was Gregory Nazianzen. Maximus, opposing some theological opinions which the imperial court approved, perished 662. Dupin, t. vi. John's translation was published by Dr. Gale, at the end of his treatise De Divisione Naturæ, ed. Ox. 1681.

52 So he declares in his dedication. He tells the king, " Difficillimum prorsus (orthodoxissime regum) servulo vestro imbecilli valde etiam in Latinis quanto magis in Græcis, laborem injunxistis." He states, that what he found in Dionysius obscure and incomprehensible, Maximus had very lucidly explained. He particularises instances which are certainly among the most recondite, and happily most useless topics of theological logic.

BOOK Hingmar, the archbishop, and another, he wrote on predestination against Gotheschalcus 53; he composed also a book De Visione Dei 54; and another, de Corpore et Sanguine 55 Domini. This last was written at the request of Charles the Bald, who was a great patron of 56 letters. This book was peculiarly unfortunate. It was assailed by several ecclesiastics, and adjudged to the flames, 57

> His principal work was, his Treatise De Divisione Naturæ, a dialogue which is distinguished for its Aristotelian acuteness, and extensive information. In his discussions on the

⁵³ Fab. Bib. Med. l.ix. c. 401. This brought upon John, besides Prudentius Tricassimus, Florus of Lyons, who attacked him in the name of the Church at Lyons. Fab. l. iv. c. 194.; and Cave, Hist. Lit. 447.

⁵⁴ Mabillon found this in MS. It begins, "Omnes sensus corporei ex conjunctione nascuntur animæ et corporis." Fab. Med. l. ix. p. 401.

⁵⁵ Fab. p. 404.

⁵⁶ Heric, the bishop of Austin, says, in his letter to Charles in 876, "Quidquid igitur literæ possunt, quidquid assequentur ingenia vobis debent." Bouquet, vii. p. 563. The editor quotes a monk of Saint Denys, in the same age, who says, "Karolus-disciplinas adeo excoluit ut earum ipse quarundam munere sagacissime fungeretur," ib. A passage of Heric's letter deserves quotation, because what he hints of the emigration of Irish literature may account for Erigena's being in France: "Quid Hiberniam memorem, contempto pelagi discrimine, pene totam cum grege philosophorum ad littora nostra migrantem - quorum quisque peritior est, ultro sibi indicit exilium ut Solomoni sapientissimo famuletur ad votum." Bouq. vii. p. 563.

⁵⁷ In 1050 and 1059, an old Chronicler speaks apparently of this book, when he says of Berengarius, "Joannem Scotum igni comburens, cujus lectione ad hanc nefariam devolutus fuerat sectam." Fab. p. 404.

nature of the Deity, and in considering how far his usual CHAP. attributes describe his nature, or but metaphorically allude to it, he manifests great subtlety. 58 On the applicability of the categories of Aristotle, to the same Being, he is also very acute and metaphysical; and he concludes that none of the categories are in this case applicable, except perhaps that of relation, and even this but figuratively. 59 In his consideration, whether the category place be a substance or an accident, he takes occasion to give concise and able definitions of the seven liberal arts, and to express his opinion on the composition of things.60 In another part, he inserts a very elaborate discussion on arithmetic, which, he says, he had learnt from his infancy.61 He also details a curious conversation on the elements of things, on the motions of the heavenly bodies, and other topics of astronomy and physiology. Among these, he even gives the means of calculating the diameters of the lunar and solar circles.62 Besides the fathers, Austin, the two Gregorys, Chrysostom, Basil, Epiphanius, Origen, Jerome, and Ambrosius, of whose works, with the Platonising Dionysius, and Maximus, he gives large extracts; he also quotes Virgil, Cicero, Aristotle, Pliny, Plato, and Boetius; he details the opinions of Eratosthenes 63, and of Pythagoras on some astronomical topics 64; he also cites Martianus Capella.65 His knowledge of Greek appears almost in every page.

63 Ibid. p. 146, 147. 149.

64 Ibid. p. 145-149.

vel sol videt, vel solum sustinet." Hist. Lat. 713. How

⁵⁸ De Divisione Naturæ, p. 6-11.

⁵⁹ Ibid. p. 13. 60 Ibid. p. 18, 19.

⁶¹ Ibid. p. 111. 62 Ibid. p. 144-149.

⁶⁵ Ibid. p. 147, 148. This ancient author, whose æra is not ascertained (though he must have preceded Gregory of Tours, who mentions him), left nine books, two de Nuptiis Philologiæ, the other seven on the seven liberal arts. His work was twice printed with innumerable mistakes. Grotius, in his fourteenth year, astonished the world by correcting justly almost all the errors. The recollection of this induced Vossius to say, "Quo Batavo—nihil nunc undique eruditius,

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The Divisione Naturæ certainly indicates great curiosity and research of mind, though it rather exercises ingenuity than conveys information. In a future age, when such disquisitions were offensive to that anti-christian despotism which was spreading its clouds over the European hemisphere, a pope, Honorius III. issued a bull to declare, that it " abounded with the worms of heretical depravity." He complains, that it was received into monasteries, and that "scholastic men, more fond of novelty than was expedient, occupied themselves studiously in reading it." He therefore commands, that they "solicitously seek for it every where; and, if they safely could, that they send it to him to be burnt, or to burn it themselves." He excommunicates all such as should keep a copy fifteen days after notice of this order. 66 As all inquiries of the human mind must be accompanied by many errors, it is a lamentable abuse of power to pursue the speculative to death or

panegyric of Gregory of Tours, lib. x. c. 31. p. 243. Barthius, one of those great scholars whose race is now extinct, says of him, "Jam ante ipsos mille annos tanta Capellæ hujus auctoritas, ut qui eum teneret, videretur omnium artium arcana nosse." Adversaria, c. 23. p. 409. Barthius describes his work thus: "Tota fere ibi Cyclopædia novem chartis absoluta est, cum innumeris interioris sapientiæ mysteriis versu atque prosa oratione indicatis et propositis," ib. p. 960. For what is known of Capella, see Fab. Bib. Lat. iii. p. 213—224.

⁶⁶ See this bull at length in Fab. Bib. Med. lib. ix. 402. It is dated 10 Kal. Feb. 1225.

infamy for efforts of thinking, which, if wrong, CHAP. the next critic or literary opponent is best fitted to detect and overthrow. No error, if left to itself, will be a perennial plant. No power can prevent, though it may retard, the growth of truth.

ERIGENA was in great favour with Charles. The king, one day as they were feasting opposite to each other, took occasion to give him a gentle rebuke for some irregularity, by asking him, "What separates a Scot from a sot?" The philosopher, with ready wit, retorted, " the table." 67 The king had the good sense and friendship to smile at the turn.

AT another time, when he was at table, the servants brought in a dish containing two large fishes, and a very small one. John was a thin little man, and was sitting near two ecclesiastics of vast size. The king bade him divide the dish with them. John, whose cheerful mind was always alive to pleasantry, conveyed the two large fishes into his own plate, and divided the little one between the ecclesiastics. The king accused him of an unfair partition. " Not so," says John "Here are two large fishes," pointing to his plate, "with a small one," alluding to himself. "There are also two large

⁶⁷ Matt. West. 333. Malmsb. 3 Gale, 360. The Latin words which John so readily converted into a pun that retorted the king's sarcasm on himself, are, "Quid distat inter sottum et Scottum?"

BOOK ones," looking at the divines, " and a little IX. one," pointing to their plates. 68

AFTER Charles's death, he was invited to England by Alfred, whose munificence rewarded his talents; he placed him at Malmsbury 69, and also at Ethelingey.

THE life of John ended unfortunately; he was stabbed by the boys he taught. 7° That he died violently, will not be questioned; but a controversy accompanies the catastrophe. 71

68 Malmsb. 3 Gale, 361. That John was an inmate in Charles's palace, we also learn from his contemporary, Pardulus, who says, "Scotum illum qui est in palatio regis Johannem nomine." Testim. prefixed.

69 Venitque ad regem Elfredum cujus munificentia illectus et magisterio ejus, ut ex scriptis regis intellexi, sublimis Melduni resedit. Malmsb. 361.

⁷⁰ So Malmsb. 361. The same words are in Matt. West. 334.; and Hoveden, 419.; and Fordun, 670.

72 The question is, whether Erigena, whom William kills at Malmsbury, is the same of whom Asser says, that he was placed by Alfred over his new monastery at Ethelingey, and that some malicious monks hired two lads to kill him at midnight, when he came to pray alone at the altar, p. 61. My own opinion is, that they are not two persons; 1st. Asser, in page 47., talks of a John, who, by the traits he gives, was Erigena. He there styles him merely "Johannem presbyterum et monachum," and he has the same phrases of the John killed at Ethelingey, in p. 61. 2d. Ingulf expressly places Erigena at Ethelingey, p. 27. 3d. Asser says, the John of Ethelingey was stabbed by two French lads, "duos servulos," 62.; and it is rather improbable that another John should at the same time be killed in the same place by lads. 4th. The ancient epitaph quoted by Malmsbury says he was martyred, which is an expression very suitable to Asser's account of his being stabbed at the altar when praying, and of the assassins intending to drag his body to a

THE proficiency and examples of Bede and CHAP. Alcuin, and their pupils and friends, seemed to promise an age of literary cultivation; and the prosperity of Egbert's reign, which immediately followed, was favourable to the realisation of this hope. But the fierce invasions of the North-' men now began. Their desolating bands spread fire and sword over the most cultivated parts of the country. Monasteries and their libraries were burnt. The studious were dispersed or destroyed. The nation was plundered and impoverished; and warfare, avenging or defensive, became the habit of the better conditioned. One man, our Alfred, made the efforts already noticed to revive literature in the island, in the midst of these destructive storms; but even he

prostitute's door. 5th. Asser's account agrees with Malmsbury's, as to his assassins being lads, whom he taught; for Asser says, that Alfred placed in that monastery French children to be taught. 6th. The mode of the assassination is the same in both. Malmsbury says, 361., "Animam exuit tormento gravi et acerbo ut dum iniquitas valida et manus infirma sæpe frustaretur et sæpe impeteret, amaram mortem obiret." I understand this to imply many wounds, and not immediate death. Asser says, "Et crudelibus afficiunt vulneribus," p.63. and that the monks found him not dead, and brought him home so, "semivivum colligentes cum gemitu et merore domum reportaverunt," p. 64. I think it improbable that two persons of the same name and station should at the same time have experienced the same singular catastrophe. I would rather suppose that Erigena had been abbot of both places, and therefore the memory of the crime was preserved at both. Asser had the property of two monasteries given to him by Alfred, p. 50.

BOOK could not obtain a sufficient interval of peace for its diffusion. The attack of Hastings in the latter part of his life, when he could have done most for letters, again renewed through his kingdom the necessity of great martial exertions; and his earls, thanes, and knights, as well as their dependants, were, for their own preservation, compelled to make warlike education and exercises the great business of life. The occupation of one-third of England by the Northmen colonisers of Northumbria and East Anglia; their hostile movements, and the attempts of similar adventurers, kept the country in the same state of martial efficiency and employment, which precluded that enjoyment of peaceful leisure in which letters flourish, and they accordingly declined. The monastic friends of Edgar endeavoured to revive them; but scarcely had Edgar acquired and transmitted a full and prosperous sovereignty, in which the Anglo-Danes and Anglo-Saxons had become melted into one nation; and Dunstan, and his friends Ethelwald and Oswald, were exerting themselves to revive literature, and to multiply its best asylums, the monastic establishments, when, under his second son, the calamities of desolating invasions of Danes and Norwegians again overspread the country, and ended in the establishment of a Danish dynasty on the throne of Alfred. This event spread a race of Danish lords over the English soil, and the mutual jealousy and bickerings between them and the old Saxon

proprietary body kept all the country in an CHAP. armed state, which made warlike accomplishment and exercises still the first necessity and occupation of all. The reign of Edward the Confessor began a new æra of peace and harmony, and literature would have again raised her head among the Anglo-Saxons; but, in the next succession, their dynasty was destroyed. Thus, though important political benefits resulted from the invading fanaticism of the North, yet their continued attacks, and the consequences that attended them, intercepted and diverted, for above a century and an half, the intellectual cultivation of the Anglo-Saxon nation.

Hence the historian has no progressive development to display in the farther contemplation of the Anglo-Saxon mind. The sufferings of the nation carried the thinking students of the day strongly towards religious literature; and little else than sermons and homilies 72, penitentiaries and confessions 73, lives of 74 saints, and translations and expositions of the Scriptures 75, with some authentic but plain and

⁷² The Anglo-Saxon MSS. of these are enumerated by Wanley in his Catalogue, pp. 1—48. 52—63. 69. 72. 81. 86—88. 90. 92. 97. 111. 116. 122. 131—144. 154—176. 186—211., &c. &c. &c. Their number exceeds by far all the other topics.

As p. 50. 112. 145. and the Rule of Benedict, 91. 122.
 Wanley's MSS. p. 79. Martyrologies, &c. 106. 185.

⁷⁵ As MSS. of the Gospels, p. 64. 76. 211.; the Heptateuch, 67.; Psalter, 76. 152.; Paraphrases of the Lord's Prayer, Creed, Gloria Patri, p. 48. 51. 81. 147, 148.;

BOOK meagre chronicles 76, formularies of superstitions 77, and medicinal tracts 78, were produced in the century preceding the Norman conquest. The only individuals who are entitled to be selected from the general inferiority and uniformity are the two Elfrics; Elfric Bata, and his scholar Elfric, the abbot and bishop, of whom the latter only deserves notice here; for whose works, chiefly grammars, translations from the Scriptures, homilies, and lives of saints, we refer the reader to Wanley's Catalogue of the Anglo-Saxon MSS. But his exhortations to his fellow clergymen to study and to diligence in their duties, ought to be remembered to his honour. To the archbishop Wulstan he writes:

> "It becomes us bishops that we should unclose that book-learning which our canons teach, and also the book of Christ to you, priests! in English speech, because all of you do not understand Latin." 79

To bishop Wulfsin he wrote: -

Prayers, 64. 147. 202.; Jubilate, 76. 168. 182, 183.; Hymns, 98, 99. 243.; Judith, 98.; and the Pseudo-Gospel of Nicodemus, 96.

⁷⁶ As the MS. Chronicles mentioned, p. 64. 84. 95. 130., &c.

⁷⁷ Their expositions of dreams, prognostications, charms, exorcisms, and predictions on the moon, thunder, birth, health, &c. abound. See p. 40. 44. 88, 89, 90. 98. 110. 114. 194. &c.

²⁸ As the MS. in p. 72-75. and 176-180. See also Apuleius de Herbis, p. 92. This latter is very valuable from the English or Saxon names of the plants which are given to the Latin ones of the original.

^{. 79} Elfric MSS. Wanley, p. 22.

"You ought often to address your clergy, and reprove CHAP. their negligence, because by their perversity the statutes of the canons and the religious knowledge of the holy church is almost destroyed." 80

His translations from the Heptateuch into Anglo-Saxon he addressed to the ealdorman Ethelwerd. 81 His letter, with other religious treatises, to Wulfget, and another to Sigwerd, show that the Anglo-Saxon language had acquired the name of English in his time: -

" I, Elfric, abbot, by this English writing, friendlily greet Wulfget, at Ylmandune, in this, that we now here speak of those English writings which I lend thee. The meaning of those writings pleased thee well, and I said that I would vet send thee more." 82 -

" Ælfric, abbot, greets friendlily Sigwerd at East Heolon. I say to thee truly that he is very wise who speaketh in works: and I turned these into English, and advise you, if you will, to read them yourself." 83

" I, Elfric, would turn this little book (his grammar) to the English phrase from that reer-charge (art of letters) which is called grammatica, because rtær-cpærte is the key that unlocks the meaning of books." 84

His anxiety for the good and correct writing of his books is thus expressed : -

" Look! you who write this book: write it by this example; and for God's love make it that it be less to the writer's credit for beauty than for reproach to me. 85

" I pray now if any one will write this book, that he make it well from this example, because I would not yet bring into it any error through false writers. It will be then

⁸º Elfric MSS. Wanley, p. 58.

⁸¹ This was printed by Thwaite.

⁸³ Ibid. 82 Elfric MSS. Wanley, p. 69.

⁸⁴ Ibid. p. 84.

⁸⁵ Ibid. p. 69.

BOOK his fault, not mine. The un-writer doth much evil if he IX. , will not rectify his mistake." 86

Anglo-Saxon Romance of Apollonius. Among the Anglo-Saxon MSS, which remain may be remarked the History or rather Romance of Apollonius, king of Tyre, which yet exists in our ancient language. 87

86 Elfric MSS. Wanley, p. 85. He begins his letter prefixed to his translation of Genesis, thus. "Ælfric monk humbly greets Æthelwærd ealdorman. You bade me. dear. that I should turn from Latin into English the book Genesis. I thought it would be a heavy thing to grant this, and you said that I need not translate more of the book than to Isaac. the son of Abraham, because some other man had translated this book from Isaac to the end,"&c. Of his translations from the first seven books of the Old Testament, he says, "Moses wrote five books by wonderful appointment. We have turned them truly into English. The book that Joshua made I turned also into English some time since, for Ethelwerd ealdorman. The book of Judges men may read in the English writing, into which I translated it." He adds of Job. "I turned formerly some sayings from this into English." Elfric de Vet. Testam. MS., and cited by Thwaites.

by Wanley, p. 147., and is there said to have been first written in Greek, and then turned into Latin during the time of the emperors. A Greek MS. of it is said to be at Vienna, with a version in modern Greek.

CHAP VII.

The Sciences of the Anglo-Saxons.

THE most enlightened nations of antiquity CHAP. had not made much progress in any of the VII. sciences but the mathematical. During the Anglo-Saxon period, the general mind of Europe turned from their cultivation, to other pursuits more necessary and congenial to their new political situation. Happily for mankind, they were attended to during this period more efficiently in the Mahomedan kingdoms. The Arabian mind being completely settled in fertile countries and mild climates, enjoyed all the leisure that was wanted for the cultivation of natural knowledge; its acuteness and activity took this direction, and began preparing that intellectual feast which we are now lavishly enjoying, and perpetually enlarging.

The history of the sciences among the Anglo-Saxons can contain little more information than that some individuals successively arose, as Aldhelm, Bede, Alcuin, Joannes Scotus, and a few more, who endeavoured to learn what former ages had known, and who freely disseminated what they had acquired. Besides the

BOOK rules of Latin poetry and rhetoric, they studied arithmetic and astronomy as laborious sciences.

Arithmetic.

In their arithmetic, before the introduction of the Arabian figures, they followed the path of the ancients, and chiefly studied the metaphysical distinctions of numbers. They divided the even numbers into the useless arrangement of equally equal, equally unequal, and unequally equal; and the odd numbers into the simple, the composite, and the mean. They considered them again, as even or odd, superfluous, defective, or perfect, and under a variety of other distinctions, still more unnecessary for any practical application, which may be seen in the little tracts of Cassiodorus and Bede. Puzzled and perplexed with all this mazy jargon, Aldhelm might well say, that the labour of all his other acquisitions was small in the comparison with that which he endured in studying arithmetic. But that they attained great practical skill in calculation the elaborate works of Bede sufficiently testify.

As all human ideas occur to the mind in some natural order of succession, and always connected with some previous remembrances and associations, the Anglo-Saxons could not become attached to the investigations of natural science, before preceding agencies had led them to attend to it. But all the impulses which were acting on their minds, were operating in very different directions; and no general current in the world around them led them to anticipate

the Arabs in the rich and unexplored country of CHAP. experimental knowledge.

YET our venerable Bede made some attempts Bede's to enter this new region; and his treatise on the natural nature of things' shows that he endeavoured to phy. introduce the study of natural philosophy among the Anglo-Saxons.

This work has two great merits. It assembles into one focus the wisest opinions of the ancients on the subjects he discusses, and it continually refers the phenomena of nature to natural causes. The imperfect state of knowledge prevented him from discerning the true natural causes of many things, but the principle of referring the events and appearances of nature to its own laws and agencies, displays a mind of a sound philosophical tendency, and was calculated to lead his countrymen to a just mode of thinking on these subjects. Although to teach that thunder and lightning were the collisions of the clouds, and that earthquakes were the effect of winds rushing through the spongy caverns of the earth were erroneous deductions, yet they were light itself compared with the superstitions which other nations have attached to these phenomena. Such theories, directed the mind into the right path of reasoning, though the correct series of the connected events and the operating laws had not

This is printed in the second volume of his works, p. 1. with the glosses of Bridferth of Ramsey, Joannes Noviomagus, and another.

BOOK then become known. The work of Bede is evidence that the establishment of the Teutonic nations in the Roman empire did not barbarise knowledge. He collected and taught more natural truths with fewer errors than any Roman book on the same subjects had accomplished. Thus his work displays an advance, not a retrogradation of human knowledge; and from its judicious selection and concentration of the best natural philosophy of the Roman empire, it does high credit to the Anglo-Saxon good sense. The following selections will convey a general idea of the substance of its contents.

> Expressing the ancient opinion that the heavens turned daily round, while the planets opposed them by a contrary course 3: He taught that the stars borrowed their light from the sun; that the sun was eclipsed by the intervention of the moon, and the moon by that of the earth; that comets were stars with hairy flames, and that the wind was moved and agitated air. 3 He said that the rainbow is formed in clouds of four colours, from the sun being opposite, whose rays being darted into the cloud is repelled back to the sun. The rain is the cloud compressed by the air into heavier drops than it can support, and that these frozen make the hail. Pestilence is produced from the air, either by excess of dryness, or of heat, or of wet.4 The tides of the ocean follow the moon, as if they were drawn backwards by its aspiration, and poured back on its impulse being withdrawn. the earth is surrounded by the waters; it is a globe. Hence we see the northern stars but not the southern, because the globous figure of the earth intercepts them.5 The volcano of Etna was the effect of fire and wind acting in the hollow sulphureous and bituminous earth of Sicily, and the bark-

² De Rer. Nat. p. 6.

⁴ Ibid. p. 38.

Ibid. p. 28. 30, 31.

⁵ Ibid. p. 39. 41. 43.

ing dogs of Scylla were but the roaring of the waves in the CHAP. whirlpools which seamen hear. 6 He had remarked the sparkling of the sea on a night upon the oars, and thought it was followed by a tempest. So the frequent leaping of porpoises from the water had caught his notice, and he connected it with the rise of wind and the clearing of the sky. 7 He remarks in another work, that sailors poured oil on the sea to make it more transparent. 8 He describes fully his ideas on the influence of the moon on the tides, and intimates that it also affects the air. 9 He speaks again of the roundness of the earth like a ball, and ascribes the inequality of days and nights to this globular rotundity.10 He thinks the Antipodes a fable; but from no superstition, but because the ancients had taught that the torrid zone was uninhabitable and impassable. Yet he seems to admit, that between this and the parts about the south pole, which he thought was a mass of congelation, there was some habitable land.** It was

⁶ De Rer. Nat. p. 49.

⁷ Ib. p. 37. He adds his presages on the weather. 'If the sun arise spotted or shrouded with a cloud, it will be a rainy day; if red, a clear one; if pale, tempestuous; if it seem concave, so that, shining in the centre, it emits rays to the south and north, there will be wet and windy weather; if it fall pale into black clouds, the north wind is advancing; if the sky be red in the evening, the next day will be fine; if red in the morning, the weather will be stormy; lightning from the north, and thunder in the east imply storm; and breezes from the south announce heat; if the moon in her last quarter look like gold, there will be wind; if on the top of her crescent black spots appear, it will be a rainy month; if in the middle, her full moon will be serene. De Nat. p. 37.

⁸ De Temporum Ratione, p. 56.

⁹ Ibid, 110, 115.

¹⁰ Ibid. p. 125.

Ihid. p. 132. St. Austin had also denied the Antipodes, or persons with their feet below us, and their heads in the sky, as an incredible thing. He thought that this part of the globe was either covered with, sea, or, if dry land, was not inhabited. De Civ. Dei. L. 16. c. 9.

BOOK the probability of human existence in such circumstances, not such a local part of the earth, which Bede discredited. 12

> For the credit both of Bede and the Anglo-Saxons, I should have been glad to have been convinced that the four books de Elementis Philosophiæ, printed as his in his works, were actually his composition; for they display a spirit of investigation, a soundness of philosophical mind, and a quantity of just opinions on natural philosophy, that would do credit to any age before that of friar Bacon. But its merit compels us to suspect the possibility of its belonging to the eighth century. 13

> THEIR astronomy was such as they could comprehend in the Greek and Latin treatises which fell into their hands on this subject. Bede was indefatigable in studying it, and his treatises were translated into the Anglo-Saxon. of which some MSS. exist still in the Cotton

¹² There are some tracts printed as Bede's, which would seem not to be his. As the Mundi Constitutio, in which he is himself quoted ' Secundum Bedam de temporibus,' vi. p. 375. And in the Argumenta Lunæ, the calculation is made for the year 936, or two hundred years after he lived. p. 197. The Astrolabium, p. 468, contains Arabic names. and the Prognostica foretells battles and pestilence at Corduba, p. 463.

¹³ The author speaks of England, p. 333, as if he belonged to it; but he also mentions the Antipodes as if he believed their existence, p. 336. He also says that a comet is not a star, p. 333: both these opinions are different from Bede's. I have since observed that Fabricius ascribes it to Guilielmus de Conchis, Bib. Med. p. 502,, a Norman who lived in the reign of Henry II.

Library. He appropriated all the practical CHAP. results and reasonings of the Roman world, but did not cultivate the mathematical investigations of the Alexandrian Greeks. All the studious men applied to it more or less, though many used it for astrological superstitions. It was indeed then studied by all men of science in two divisions, and that which we call astrology, the legacy of the Chaldeans, was for a long time the most popular. It was perhaps on this account, rather than from a love of the nobler directions of the science, that our ancient chroniclers are usually minute in noticing the eclipses which occurred, and the comets and meteors which occasionally appeared. 14

THEIR geographical knowledge must have Their geobeen much improved by Adamnan's account of graphy. his visit to the Holy Land, which Bede abridged: and by the sketch given of general geography in Orosius, which Alfred made the property of all his countrymen, by his translation and masterly additions. The eight hides of land given by his namesake for a MS. of cosmographical treatises 15, of wonderful workmanship, may have been conceded rather to the beauty of the MS, than to its contents. But, notwithstanding these helps, the most incorrect and absurd notions seem to have prevailed among

¹⁴ Even Bede says, the comet portends 'change of kingdoms, or pestilence, or wars, or tempest, or drought.' De Nat. Rer. p. 30.

¹⁵ Bede, 299.

globe, if we may judge from the MS. treatises on this subject, which they took the trouble to adorn with drawings, and sometimes to translate.

Two of these are in the Cotton Library, and a short notice of their contents may not be uninteresting, as a specimen of their geographical and physical knowledge.

The MS. Tib. B. 5. contains a topographical description of some eastern regions, in Latin and Saxon. From this we learn there is a place in the way to the Red Sea which contains red hens, and that if any man touches them, his hand and all his body are burnt immediately: also, that pepper is guarded by serpents, which are driven away by fire, and this makes the pepper black. We read of people with dogs heads, boars' tusks, and horses' manes, and breathing flames. Also of ants as big as dogs, with feet like grasshoppers, red and black. These creatures dig gold for fifteen days. Men go with female camels, and their young ones, to fetch it, which the ants permit, on having the liberty to eat the young camels. 16

The same learned work informed our ancestors that there was a white human race fifteen feet high, with two faces on one head, long nose, and black hair, who in the time of parturition went to India to lie in. Other men had thighs twelve feet long, and breasts seven feet high. They were cannibals. There was another sort of mankind with no heads, who had eyes and mouths in their breasts. They were eight feet tall and eight feet broad. Other men had eyes which shone like a lamp in a dark night. In the ocean there was a soft-voiced race, who were human to the navel, but all below were the limbs of an ass. These fables even came so near as Gaul; for

¹⁶ This was probably a popular notion; for it is said, among their prognostics, that if the sun shine on the fourth day, the camels will bring much gold from the ants, who keep the gold hoards. MSS. CCC. Cant. Wanl. 110.

it tells us that in Liconia, in Gaul, there were men of three CHAP. colours, with heads like lions, and mouths like the sails of a windmill. They were twenty feet tall. They run away, and sweat blood, but were thought to be men. Let us however, in justice to our ancestors, recollect that most of these fables are gravely recorded by Pliny. The Anglo-Saxons were, therefore, not more credulous or uninformed than the Roman population.

The descriptions of foreign ladies were not very gallant. It is stated that near Babylon there were women with beards to their breasts. They were clothed in horses' hides, and were great hunters, but they used tigers and leopards instead of dogs. Other women had boars' tushes, hair to their heels, and a cow's tail. They were thirteen feet high. They had a beautiful body, as white as marble, but they had camels' feet. Black men living on burning mountains; trees bearing precious stones; and a golden vineyard which had berries one hundred and fifty feet long, which produced jewels; gryphons, phænixes, and beasts with asses' ears, sheep's wool, and birds' feet, are among the other wonders which instructed our ancestors. The accounts in the MS. Vitellius, A. 15. rival the phænomena just recited, with others as credible, and are also illustrated with drawings.

WE cannot now get at the national opinions of the Anglo-Saxons on physical subjects in any other way than by observing what things they thought worthy to be committed to writing. They who could write were among the most informed part of the Saxon society, and as their parchment materials were scanty, it seems reasonable to suppose that what they employed themselves in writing stood high in their estimation. We will add a few things which are in Anglo-Saxon in a MS. in the Cotton Library.

" Istorius said that this world's length is twelve thousand miles, and its breadth six thousand three hundred, besides the islands. There are thirty-four kinds of snakes on the IX.

BOOK earth; thirty-six kinds of fish, and fifty-two kinds of flying fowls. The name of the city to which the sun goes up is called Jaiaca; the city where it sets is Jainta. Asguges, the magician, said that the sun was of burning stone. The sun is red in the first part of the morning, because he comes out of the sea; he is red in the evening, because he looks over hell. The sun is bigger than the earth, and hence he is hot in every country. The sun shines at night in three places; first in Leviathan the whale's inside. He shines next in hell, and afterwards on the islands named Glith, and there the souls of holy men remain till doomsday. Neither the sun nor the moon shines on the Red Sea, nor does the wind blow upon it." Some excellent moral and prudential maxims follow in the MS. 37

Their views on philosophy.

THE Anglo-Saxon scholars, though defective in actual knowledge, had just conceptions of the objects of philosophy. Thus Alcuin defines it to be the research into natural things, and the knowledge of divine and human affairs. distinguishes it into knowledge and opinion. He describes it to be knowledge, when a thing is perceived with certainty, as that an eclipse of the sun is caused by the intervention of the moon; but that it is only opinion when it is uncertain, as the magnitude of heaven or the depth of the earth. 18

HE divides philosophy into three branches; physics, ethics, and logic. But in his further considerations he exhibits not so much the deficiencies of the Anglo-Saxon mind, as the imperfect state of the knowledge which former times had handed down to it; for all the subjects

³⁷ MS. Cott. Lib. Julius, A. 2. 928 Alc. Dialectica, p. 1356.

which he comprises in physics are: arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy. That extensive field of science to which we now almost exclusively apply the name of physics, natural philosophy, had not been discovered or attended to by the Greeks and Romans; and still less chemistry, mineralogy, and the analogous sciences. The Anglo-Saxon scholars formed themselves chiefly on the Roman writers, and in general did not go beyond them. Alcuin gives us another train of definitions in physics.—

"Physic is nature; physica is natural: it discusses the nature and contemplation of all things. From physica proceed arithmetic, astronomy, astrology, mechanics, medicine, geometry, and music.

Arithmetic is the science of numbers.

Astronomy is the law of the stars, by which they rise and set.

Astrology is the reason, and nature, and power of the stars, and the conversion of the heavens.

Mechanics is the first skilfulness of the art of working in metals, wood, and stones.

Medicine is the knowledge of remedies discovered for the temperament and health of the body.

Geometry is the science of measuring spaces, and the magnitudes of bodies.

Music is the division of sounds, the varieties of the voice, and the modulation of singing." 19

It is amusing to observe, in the absence of solid knowledge, on what elaborate trifling the Anglo-Saxons sometimes employed themselves. The following is a dialogue of Alcuin, with prince Pepin, the son of Charlemagne. It is the scholar who questions.

19 Alb. Op. p. 1353.

BOOK IX. "What is a letter? - The keeper of history.

What is a word? - The betrayer of the mind.

What produces words? - The tongue.

What is the tongue? - The scourge of the air.

What is air? - The preserver of life.

What is life? — The gladness of the blessed; the sorrow of the wretched; the expectation of death.

What is death? — The inevitable event; the uncertain pilgrimage; the tears of the living; the confirmation of our testament; the thief of man.

What is man? — The slave of death; a transient traveller; a local guest.

What is man like? - An apple.

How is man placed? - As a lamp in the wind.

Where is he placed? - Between six walls.

What? - Above, below, before, behind, on the right, and on the left.

How many companions has he? - Four.

Whom? - Heat, cold, dryness, wet.

In how many ways is he changeable? - Six.

Which are they? — Hunger, fulness; rest, labour; watchings and sleep.

What is sleep? — The image of death.

What is man's liberty? - Innocence.

What is the head? — The crown of the body.

What is the body? — The home of the mind.

What are the hairs? - The garments of the head.

What is the beard? — The discrimination of sex; the honour of age.

What is the brain? — The preserver of the memory.

What are the eyes? — The leaders of the body; vessels of light; the index of the mind.

What are the ears? — The collators of sounds.

What is the forehead? -The image of the mind.

What is the mouth? — The nourisher of the body.

What are the teeth? - The millstones of our food.

What are the lips? - The doors of the mouth.

What is the throat? — The devourer of the food.

What are the hands? - The workmen of the body.

What is the heart? — The receptacle of life.

What is the liver? - The keeper of our heat.

What is the spleen? - The source of laughter and mirth. CHAP.

What are the bones? — The strength of the body. What are the thighs? — The capitals of our pillars.

What are the legs? - The pillars of the body.

What are the feet? - Our moveable foundation.

What is blood? - The moisture of the veins: the aliment of life.

What are the veins? - The fountains of flesh.

· What is heaven? — A rotatory sphere.

What is light? - The face of all things.

What is day? - The incitement of labour.

What is the sun? - The splendor of the world; the beauty of heaven; the grace of nature; the honor of day; the distributer of the hours.

What is the moon? - The eye of night; the giver of dew; the prophetess of the weather.

What are the stars? - The paintings of the summit of nature; the seaman's pilots; the ornaments of night.

What is rain? - The earth's conception; the mother of

What is a cloud? - The night of day; the labour of the

What is wind? - The perturbation of air; the moving principle of water; the dryer of earth.

What is the earth? - The mother of the growing; the nurse of the living; the storehouse of life; the devourer of all things.

What is the sea? — The path of audacity; the boundary of the earth; the divider of regions; the receptacle of the rivers; the fountain of showers; the refuge in danger; the favourer of pleasures.

What are rivers? - Motion never-ceasing; the refection of the sun: the irrigators of the earth.

What is water? - The ally of life; the washer of filth.

What is fire? - Excess of heat; the nourisher of the new-born; the maturer of fruits.

What is cold? - The ague of the limbs.

What is frost? - The persecutor of herbs; the destroyer of leaves; the fetter of the earth; the source of the waters.

What is snow? - Dry water.

What is winter? - The banishment of summer.

BOOK IX. What is spring? — The painter of the earth.

What is summer? — The reclothing of earth; the ripener of corn.

What is autumn? — The granary of the year.

What is the year? - The chariot of the world.

What does it carry? - Night and day; cold and heat.

Who are its drivers? - The sun and moon.

How many are its palaces? - Twelve.

What is a ship? — A wandering house; a perpetual inn; a traveller without footsteps; the neighbour of the sands.

What is the sand? - The wall of the earth.

What makes bitter things sweet? - Hunger.

What makes men never weary? - Gain.

What gives sleep to the watching? - Hope.

What is a wonder? — I saw a man standing; a dead man walking who never existed.

How could this be? - An image in water.

An unknown person, without tongue or voice, spoke to me, who never existed before, nor has existed since, nor ever will be again; and whom I neither heard nor knew?——It was your dream.

I saw the dead produce the living, and by the breath of the living the dead were consumed? — From the friction of trees fire was produced which consumed.

I saw fire pause in the water unextinguished?—From flint. Who is that whom you cannot see unless you shut your eyes?—He who sneezes will show him to you.

I saw a man with eight in his hand, he took away seven, and six remained? — School-boys know this.

Who is he that will rise higher if you take away his head? — Look at your bed and you will find him there.

I saw a flying woman with an iron beak, a wooden body, and a feathered tail, carrying death? — She is a companion of soldiers.

What is that which is, and is not? - Nothing.

How can a thing be, yet not exist? - In name and not in fact.

What is a silent messenger? — That which I hold in my hand.

What is that? - My letter."20

THE astronomical opinions which they had CHAP. imbibed from their classical masters were probably as good as their books could supply, or Their astronomy. their scholars understand. Elfric has transmitted to us, out of Alcuin, their acquired opinions on the motions of the heavens, which may be thus translated: -

"The earth consists of four creatures, or elements; fire, air, water, and earth. The nature of fire is hot and dry; of air, warm and wet; of water, cold and wet; of earth, cold and dry. Heaven is of the nature of fire, and it is always turning the stars. Foreign writers have said that it would fall, on account of its swiftness, if the seven wandering stars (dweligendan steorran) did not resist its course. The stars of heaven are always turning round the earth from east to west, and strive against the seven wandering stars. These are called erring or wandering stars, (dweligende or worigende,) not because of any error, but because each of them goeth on in its own course, sometimes above, sometimes below, and are not fast in the firmament of heaven, as the other stars are. The farthest the heathen calls Saturnus: he fulfilleth his course in thirty years. The one beneath Saturn they call Jove, and he fulfilleth his course in twelve vears. The third, that goeth beneath Jove, they call Mars; and he fulfilleth his course in two years. The fourth is the Sun: she fulfilleth her course in twelve months: that is, three hundred and sixty-five days. The fifth is called Venus; he fulfilleth his course in three hundred and sixtyeight days. The sixth is Mercury, great and bright; he fulfilleth his course in three hundred and twenty-nine days. The seventh is the Moon, the lowest of all the stars; he fulfilleth his course in twenty-seven days and eight hours. These seven stars move to the east, in opposition to the heavens, and are stronger than they are." 21

It would be absurd to talk about their che- Their chemistry, as they had none; but their methods of mistry.

²¹ Elfric's Lives of the Saints, MS. Cott. Julius, E. 7.

BOOK preparing gold for their gold writing may be mentioned, as they were in fact so many chemical experiments.

> One method. "File gold, very finely, put it in a mortar, and add the sharpest vinegar; rub it till it becomes black, and then pour it out. Put to it some salt or nitre, and so it will dissolve. So you may write with it, and thus all the metals may be dissolved."

> THE gold letters of the Anglo-Saxon MSS. are on a white embossment, which is probably a calcareous preparation. Modern gilding is made on an oil size of yellow ochre, or on a water size of gypsum, or white oxide of lead, or on similar substances. For gilding on paper or parchment, gold powder is now used as much as leaf gold. Our ancestors used both occasionally.

> Another method of ancient chrysography: "Melt some lead, and frequently immerge it in cold water. Melt gold, and pour that into the same water, and it will become brittle. Then rub the gold filings carefully with quicksilver, and purge it carefully while it is liquid. Before you write, dip the pen in liquid alum, which is best purified by salt and vinegar."

ANOTHER method:

"Take thin plates of gold and silver, rub them in a mortar with Greek salt or nitre till it disappears. Pour on water and repeat it. Then add salt, and so wash it. When the gold remains even, add a moderate portion of the flowers of copper and bullock's gall; rub them together, and write and burnish the letters."

OTHER methods are mentioned, by which even marble and glass might be gilt. These descriptions are taken by Muratori from a MS. of the ninth century, which contains many other CHAP. curious receipts on this subject. 22

THEY had the art of secret writing, by substituting other letters for the five vowels: thus,

THE MS. in the Cotton Library gives several examples of this 23:

> nýr thkr pprzen rýllke thkne to pæbrnne pmnkxm knkmkcprxm sxprxm dpmknbktxr kn npmknf dk sxmmk.

Which are.

nýr thir rpezen rýllic thinc to pæbenne omnium inimicorum suorum dominabitur. In nomine Di summi.

Among the disorders which afflicted the An- Their glo-Saxons, we find instances of the scrofula, the gout, or foot adl; fever, or gedrif; paralysis, hemiplegia; ague, dysentery; consumption, or lungs adl; convulsions, madness, blindness, diseased head, the head-ach (heafod-ece), and tumours in various parts. 24 But if we consider the charms which they had against diseases as evidence of the existence of those diseases, then the melancholy catalogue may be increased by the addition of the poccas (pustules), sore eyes and ears, blegen and blacan blegene (blains and

²³ Vitellius, E. 18. ²³ Tom. ii. p. 375—383.

²⁴ Malmsb. 285. Bonif. Lett. 16. M. B. 115. Bede, 86. 509. 3 Gale, 470. Eddius, 44. Bede, 372. iv. 23. 31. iii. 12. iv. 6.; 224. 236. 256. Ingulf, 11. Bede, 297. iii. 11. iv. 3.: 10. v. 2.; 246.; 235. iv. 19.

BOOK boils), elfsidenne (the night-mare), cyrnla (indurated glands), toth-ece, aneurisms (wennas et mannes, heortan), and some others. The king's evil is mentioned in a letter from pope Zachary to Boniface. 26

> NATIONS in every age and climate have considered diseases to be the inflictions of evil beings, whose power exceeded that of man. Adapting their practice to their theory, many have met the calamity by methods which were the best adapted, according to their system, to remove them; that is, they attacked spells by spells. They opposed charms and exorcisms to what they believed to be the work of demoniacal incantations. The Anglo-Saxons had the same superstitions. Their pagan ancestors had referred diseases to such causes, and, believing the principle, they resorted to the same remedies. Hence we have in their MSS. a great variety of incantations and exorcisms against the disorders which distressed them.

> When some of their stronger intellects had attained to discredit these superstitions, and especially after Christianity opened to them a new train of associations; this system of diseases originating from evil spirits, and of their being curable by magical phrases, received a fatal blow. It had begun to decline before they were

²⁵ Cal. A. 15. CCC. Cant. Wanley, 115. Tit. D. 26. Wanley, Cat. 304. 305.

²⁶ Mag. Bib. Pat. vol. xvi. p. 115.

enlightened by any just medical knowledge, and CHAP. the consequence was, that they had nothing to substitute in the stead of charms, but the fancies and pretended experience of those who arrogated knowledge on the subject. Before men began to take up medicine as a profession, the domestic practice of it would of course fall on females, who, in every stage of society, assume the kind task of nursing sickness; and of these the aged, as the most experienced, would be preferred.

But the Anglo-Saxons, so early as the seventh century, had men who made the science of medicine a study, and who practised it as a profession. It is probable that they owed this invaluable improvement to the Christian clergy, who not only introduced books from Rome, but who, in almost every monastery, had one brother who was consulted as the physician of the place. We find physicians frequently mentioned in Bede; and among the letters of Boniface, there is one from an Anglo-Saxon, desiring some books de medicinalibus. He says they had plenty of such books in England, but that the foreign drawings in them were unknown to his countrymen, and difficult to acquire. 27

WE have a splendid instance of the attention they gave to medical knowledge, in the Anglo-Saxon medical treatise described by Wanley, which he states to have been written about the time of Alfred. The first part of it contains

BOOK eighty-eight remedies against various diseases. The second part adds sixty-seven more; and in the third part are seventy-six. Some lines between the second and third part state it to have been possessed by one BALD, and to have been written at his command by Cild. It is probably a compilation from the Latin medical writers. Wanley presumes that Bald wrote it; but the words imply rather possession than authorship. 28 Their construction is ambiguous.

WE find several Saxon MSS. of medical botany. There is one, a translation of the Herbarium of Apuleius, with some good drawings of herbs and flowers, in the Cotton Library. Their remedies were usually vegetable medicines. 29

Their Surgery.

WE have a few hints of their surgical attentions, but they seem not to have exceeded those common operations which every people, a little removed from barbarism, cannot fail to know and to use.

WE read of a skull fractured by a fall from a horse, which the surgeon closed and bound up 3°; of a man whose legs and arms were broken by a fall, which the surgeons cured by tight ligatures 31; and of a diseased head, in the treatment of which the medical attendants were successful. 32 But we find many cases in which their efforts were unavailing. Thus in an in-

²⁸ Bald habet hunc librum Cild quem conscribere jussit. Wanl. Cat. 180.

²⁹ MS. Cott. Vitel. C.3.

³º Bede, v. c. 6. 32 Bede, v. 2.

³¹ Eddius, p. 63.

stance of a great swelling on the eyelid, which CHAP. grew daily, and threatened the loss of the sight; the surgeons exhausted their skill to no purpose, and declared that it must be cut off. 33 In a case of a great swelling, with burning heat, on the neck, where the necklace came, it was laid open to let out the noxious matter. This treatment gave the patient ease for two days, but on the third the pains returned, and she 34 died. Another person had his knee swelled, and the muscles of his leg drawn up till it became a contracted limb. Medical aid is said to have been exhibited in vain, till an angel advised wheat flower to be boiled in milk, and the limb to be poulticed with it, applied while 35 warm. To recover his frozen feet, a person put them into the bowels of a horse, 36

Venesection was in use. We read of a man bled in the arm. The operation seems to have been done unskilfully, for a great pain came on while bleeding, and the arm swelled very ³⁷ much. Their lancet was called æder-seax, or vein-knife. But their practice of phlebotomy was governed by the most mischievous superstition. It was not used when expediency required, but when their superstitions permitted. They marked the seasons and the days on which they believed that bleeding would be fatal. Even Theodore, the monk, to whom they owed so much of their

11

³³ Bede, iv. 32. 34 Ibid. p. 19. 35 Ibid. p. 230.

³⁶ Malmsb. 201. 37 Bede, v. 2. .

BOOK literature, added to their follies on this subject, by imparting the notion that it was dangerous to bleed when the light of the moon and the tides were increasing. 38 According to the rules laid down in an Anglo-Saxon MS. the second, third, fifth, sixth, ninth, eleventh, fifteenth, seventeenth, and twentieth days of the month, were bad days for bleeding. On the tenth, thirteenth, nineteenth, twenty-first, twenty-third, twenty-fourth, twenty-fifth, twenty-sixth, and twenty-eighth days, it was hurtful to bleed, except during certain hours of the days. The rest of the month was proper for 39 phlebotomy. They had their tales to support their credulity. Thus we read of "sum læce, or a physician, who let his horse blood on one of these days, and it lay soon dead." 40

> WE will add, as a specimen of their medical charms, their incantation to cure a fever.

> " In nomine dni nri Ihu Xpi tera tera tera testis contera taberna gise ges mande leis bois eis andies mandies moab leb lebes Dns ds adjutor sit illi ill eax filiax artifex am." 4x

> Two of their medicines may be added, one for the cure of consumption, the other for the gout.

> With lungen adle. - " Take hwite hare hunan (white horehound) and ysypo (hyssop) and rudan (rue) and gallue (sowbread), and brysewyrt, and brunwyrt (brown wort), and wude merce (parsley), and grundeswylian (groundsel), of

³⁸ Bede, v. 3.

⁴º Ibid. 126.

³⁹ MS. Cott. Lib. Tiber. A. 3.

⁴¹ Ibid. 125.

each twenty penny-weights, and take one sester 42 full of CHAP. old ale, and seethe the herbs till the liquor be half boiled away. Drink every day fasting a neap-full cold, and in the evening as much warm."

With fot adle (the gout) .- " Take the herb datulus or titulosa, which we call greata crauleac (tuberose isis). Take the heads of it, and dry them very much, and take thereof a pennyweight and an half, and the pear-tree and roman bark, and cummin, and a fourth part of laurel-berries, and of the other herbs half a pennyweight of each, and six peppercorns, and grind all to dust, and put two egg-shells full of wine. This is true leechcraft. Give it to the man to drink till he he well." 43

Pund eler zepihah xii penezum lærre ahonne pund pæaper. Puns ealoth zepihch vi penezum mane thon puns pætner. Puns piner zepihth xv penezum mone thon 1 puns pætper. Pund hunger zepihch xxxiv penegum mope chon pund pæcper. Pund burepan zepihah lxxx penegum læffe thon pund pærner. Puns beoper zepihth xxii penezum lærre thon puns pætner. Punt meloper zepihah cxv penezum ærre ahon punt pærper, Puns beana zepihch ly penezum lærre chon puns pæcner. And xv pund pæcper zach to Sertpe.

Saxon MS. ap. Wanley Cat. p. 179.

⁴² The quantity of a sester appears, from the following curious list of Anglo-Saxon weights and measures, to have been fifteen pints:

⁴³ MS. Cott. Lib. Vitell. C. 3.

CHAP. VIII.

The Anglo-Saxon Metaphysics.

BOOK IX. Their Metaphysics.

Bede on substances.

THE three men of letters among the Anglo-Saxons who handled any branch of the metaphysical subjects, besides Alfred, were Bede, Alcuin, and Joannes Erigena.

IT is in the tract on substances that Bede's metaphysical tendencies appear.

He compares the three inseparable essences of the Trinity to the circularity, light, and heat of the sun. The globular body of the sun never leaves the heavens, but its light, which he compares to the Filial Personality, and its heat, which he applies to the Spiritual essence, descend to earth, and diffuse themselves every where; animating the mind, and pervading and softening the heart. Yet, although universally present, light seems never to quit the sun, for there we always behold it; and heat is its unceasing companion. As circles have neither beginning nor end, such is the Deity. Nothing is above; nothing is below; nothing is beyond him; no term concludes him; no time confines him.

He pursues the same analogies in other parts of nature. In water he traces the spring; its flowing river, and terminating lake. They differ in form, but are one in substance, and are always inseparable. No river can flow without its spring, and must issue into some collecting locality.2—

Bede de Subst. vol. ii. p. 304-6.

² Ibid. p. 307. His view of nature is not unpleasing. "Observe how all things are made to suit, and are governed: heat by cold; cold by heat; day by night; and winter by

In his treatise on the soul, Alcuin, in a short, CHAP. but rational essay, discusses its faculties and nature. A few selections may interest.

Alcuin on the soul.

He distinguishes in it a three-fold nature: the appetitive; the rational, and the irrascible. Two of these we have in common with animals; but man alone reasons, counsels, and excels in intelligence. The rational faculty should govern the others. Its virtues are, prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude; and if these be made perfect by benevolence, they bring the soul near to the Divine nature. 3

" The memory, the will, and the intelligence, are all distinct, yet one. Though each be separate, they are perfectly united. I perceive that I perceive, will, and remember; I will to remember, perceive, and will; and I remember that

I have willed, perceived, and recollected.

" We may remark the wonderful swiftness of the soul in forming things which it has perceived by the senses. From these, as from certain messengers, it forms figures in itself, with inexpressible celerity, of whatever it has perceived of sensible things; and it lays up these forms in the treasury of its memory.

"Thus, he who has seen Rome figures Rome in his mind, and its form; and when he shall hear the name of Rome, or remember it, immediately the animus of it will occur to the memory, where its form lies concealed. The soul there recognises it, where it had hidden it.

" It is yet more wonderful that if unknown things be read

summer. See how the heavens and the earth are respectively adorned: the heavens by the sun, the moon, and stars; the earth by its beautiful flowers, and its herbs, trees, and fruits. From these mankind derive all their food; their lovely jewels; the various pictures so delectably woven in their hangings and valuable cloths; their variegated colours; the sweet melody of strings and organs; the splendor of gold and silver, and the other metals; the pleasant streams of water so necessary to bring ships, and agitate our mills; the fragrant aroma of myrrh; and, lastly, the interesting countenance peculiar to the human form." Ibid. p. 308.

³ Albini Opera, p. 770.

⁴ Ibid. p. 773...

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or heard of by the ears of the soul, it immediately forms a figure of the unknown thing; as of Jerusalem. When seen it may be very different from the figure of our fancy. But whatever the soul has seen in other cities that are known to it, it imagines may be in Jerusalem. From known species it images the unknown. It does not fancy walls, houses, and streets in a man; nor the limbs of a man in a city, but buildings, as are usual in cities. So in every thing. The mind from the known forms the unknown.

"While I think of Jerusalem I cannot, at that moment, think of Rome; or when I think of any other single thing I cannot then think of many; but that thing only is present to my mind which I deliberate upon, till, sooner or later, this departs and another occurs.

"This lively and heavenly faculty, which is called mens, or animus, is of such great mobility that it does not even rest in sleep. In a moment, if it chooses, it surveys heaven; it flies over the sea, and wanders through regions and cities. It places in its sight, by thinking, all things that it likes, however far removed.

"The mind, or soul, is the intellectual spirit, always in motion, always living, and capable of willing both good and evil. By the benignity of its Creator it is ennobled with free will. Created to rule the movements of the flesh, it is invisible, incorporeal; without weight or colour; circumscribed, yet entire in every member of its flesh. It is now afflicted with the cares, and grieved with the pains of the body; now it sports with joy; now thinks of known things; and now seeks to explore those which are unknown. It wills some things; it does not will others. Love is natural to it.

"It is called by various names: the soul, while it vivifies; the spirit, when it contemplates; sensibility, while it feels; the mind, when it knows; the intellect, when it understands; the reason, while it discriminates; the will, when it consents; the memory, when it remembers; but these are not as distinct in substance as in names: they are but one soul. Virtue is its beauty; vice its deformity. It is often so affected by some object of knowledge, that, though its eyes

be open, it sees not the things before it, nor hears a sound- CHAP. ing voice; nor feels a touching body.

" As to what the soul is, nothing better occurs to us to say than that it is the spirit of life; but not of that kind of life which is in cattle, which is without a rational mind. The beauty and ornament of the human soul is the study of wisdom. What is more blessed to the soul than to love the Supreme Good, which is God? What is happier to it than to prepare itself to be worthy of everlasting beatitude, knowing itself most truly to be immortal." 6

But the most metaphysical treatise that ap- Erigena peared among the Anglo-Saxons was the elaborate work, or dialogue, of Joannes Scotus, or of nature. Erigena, the friend of Alfred and Charlemagne, on nature and its distinctions. It emulates the sublimest researches of the Grecians. It is too long to be analysed; but a few extracts from its commencement may be acceptable, to show his style of thought and expression:-

- " Nature may be divided into, That which creates, and is not created; That which is created, and creates; That which is created, and does not create; and that which neither creates nor is created.7
- "The essences (or what, from Aristotle, in those days they called the substance) of all visible or invisible creatures cannot be comprehended by the intellect. But whatever is perceived in every thing, or by the corporeal sense, is nothing else but an accident, which is known either by its quality or quantity, form, matter, or differences, or by its place or time. Not what it is, but how it is.

" The first order of being is the Deity; He is the essence of all things.

" The second begins from the most exalted, intellectual virtue nearest about the Deity, and descends from the sub-

⁶ Albini Opera, p. 776-778.

Joan. Erig. de Divisione Naturæ, p. 1.

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limest angel to the lowest part of the rational and irrational creation. The three superior orders are, 1st. The Cherubim, Seraphim, and Thrones. The 2d. The Virtues, Powers, and Dominations. The 3d. The Principalities, Archangels, and Angels.

"The cause of all things is far removed from those which have been created by it. Hence the reasons of created things that are eternally and unchangeably in it, must be also wholly removed from their subjects.

"In the angelic intellects there are certain theophanies of these reasons; that is, certain comprehensible, divine apparitions of the intellectual nature. The divine essence is fully comprehensible by no intelligent creature.

"Angels see not the causes themselves of things which subsist in the Divine essence; but certain divine apparitions, or theophanies, of the eternal causes whose images they are. In this manner angels always behold God. So the just in this life, while in the extremity of death, and in the future, will see him as the angels do.

"We do not see him by Himself, because angels do not. This is not possible to any creature. But we shall contemplate the theophanies which he shall make upon us, each according to the height of his sanctity and wisdom." 8

⁸ Joan. Erig. de Divisione Naturæ, p. 1-4.

CHAP. IX.

The Arts of the Anglo-Saxons.

THE art of Music has been as universal as CHAP. poetry; but like poetry, has every where existed in different degrees of refinement. Their Music. Among rude nations, it is in a rude and noisy state. Among the more civilised, it has attained all the excellence which science, taste, feeling, and delicate organisation can give.

We derive the greatest portion of our most interesting music from harmony of parts; and we attain all the variety of expression and scientific combination which are familiar to us, by the happy use of our musical notation. The ancients were deficient in both these respects. It has not been ascertained that they had harmony of parts, and therefore all their instruments and voices were in unison; and so miserable was their notation, that it has been contended by the learned, with every appearance of truth, that they had no other method of marking time than by the quantity of the syllables of the words placed over the notes. Saint Jerome might therefore well say on music, "Un-

BOOK less they are retained by the memory sounds perish, because they cannot be written."

> THE ancients, so late as the days of Cassiodorus, or the sixth century, used three sorts of musical instruments, which he calls the percussionalia, the tensibilia, and the inflatila. The percussionalia were silver or brazen dishes, or such things as, when struck with some force, yielded a sweet ringing. The tensibilia he describes to have consisted of chords, tied with art, which, on being struck with a plectrum, soothed the ear with a delightful sound, as the various kinds of cytharæ. The inflatila were wind-instruments, as tubæ, calami, organa, panduria, and such like.2

> THE Anglo-Saxons had the instruments of chords, and wind-instruments.

> In the drawings on their MSS, we see the horn, trumpet, flute, and harp, and a kind of lyre of four strings, struck by a plectrum.

> In one MS. we see a musician striking the four-stringed lyre, while another is accompanying him with two flutes, into which he is blowing at the same time. 3

> In the MSS, which exhibit David and three musicians playing together, David has a harp of eleven strings, which he holds with his left

¹ Jerom ad Dard. de Mus. Instr. — Guido, by his invention of our musical notation, removed this complaint.

a Cassiod. Op. ii. p. 507. 3 MS, Cott. Cleop. C. 8.

hand while he plays with his right fingers; an- CHAP. other is playing on a violin or guitar of four, strings with a bow; another blows a short trumpet, supported in the middle by a pole, while another blows a curved horn. 4 This was probably the representation of an Anglo-Saxon concert.

THE chord instrument like a violin was perhaps that to which a disciple of Bede alludes. when he expresses how delighted he should be to have "a player who could play on the cithara, which we call rote." 5

OF the harp, Bede mentions, that in all festive companies it was handed round, that every one might sing in turn. 6 It must have therefore been in very common use.

Dunstan is also described by his biographer to have carried with him to a house his cythara, " which in our language we call hearpan." 7 He hung it against the wall, and one of the strings happening to sound untouched, it was esteemed a miracle.

THE organ was in use among the Anglo-Saxons. Cassiodorus and Fortunatus mention the word organ as a musical instrument, but it has been thought to have been a collection of

⁴ MS, Cott. Tib. C. 6.

^{5 16} Mag. Bib. p. 88. Snorre calls the musicians in the court of an ancient king of Sweden "Leckara, Harpara, Gigiara, Fidlara." Yng. Saga, c. xxv. p. 30.

⁶ Bede, lib. iv. c. 24.

⁷ MS. Cleop.

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tubes blowed into by the human breath. Muratori has contended that the art of making organs like ours was known in the eighth century only to the Greeks; that the first organ in Europe was the one sent to Pepin from Greece in 756, and that it was in 826 that a Venetian priest, who had discovered the secret, brought it into France. 8

A PASSAGE which I have observed in Aldhelm's poem, De Laude Virginum, entirely overthrows these theories; for he, who died in 709, and who never went to Greece, describes them in a manner which shows that he was acquainted with great organs made on the same principle as our own:—

Maxima millenis auscultans organa flabris Mulceat auditum ventosis follibus iste Quamlibet auratis fulgescant cætera capsis.⁹

This is literally,

"Listening to the greatest organs with a thousand blasts, the ear is soothed by the windy bellows, while the rest shines in the gilt chests."

Another evidence of the antiquity of organs among the Anglo-Saxons has occurred to my observation in the works of Bede, a contemporary and survivor of Aldhelm. The passage is express, and also shows how they were made.—

"An organum is a kind of tower made with various pipes, from which, by the blowing of bellows, a most copious sound

⁸ Murat. de Art. Ital. ii. p. 357.

^{9 13} Max. Bib. Pat. 3.

is issued; and that a becoming modulation may accompany CHAP. this, it is furnished with certain wooden tongues from the interior part, which, the master's fingers skilfully repressing, produce a grand and also a most sweet melody." 10

HE also describes the drum, cymbals, and harp. —

"The DRUM is a tense leather, stretched on two cones (metas) joined together by their acute part, which resounds on being struck."

"The CYMBALS are very small vessels composed from mixed metals, which, struck together on the concave side, with skilful modulation, give a most acute sound, with delectable coincidence." 11

"A skilful HARPER, stretching many chords on his harp, tempers them with such sharpness and gravity, that the upper suit the lower in melody. Some having the difference of a semi-tone, some of one tone, some of two tones. Some yield the consonancy diatessaron, others the diapente, others the diapason.

" Having the harp in his hand, arranged with suitable strings (chordis) he urges some to an acute sound, and others he governs to a graver one. Thus he disposes them by the application of his fingers. He strikes them in what manner he pleases, so that each adapted to the others yield the consonancy diapason, which consists of eight strings (chordis). The diapente consists of five chordis, and the diatessaron of four." 12

BEDE also mentions "the minor intervals of the voices, which sound two tones as one, or a semi-tone; and that the semi-tone was used in the high-sounding as well as the grand-sounding chords."13 He mentions the organ in another place, with the viola 14 and harp 15, and reasons

¹⁰ Bede, Op. vol. viii. p. 1062

^{**} Ibid. p. 1061, 1062.

¹² Ibid. p. 1070.

²³ Ibid. p. 1070.

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 417.

¹⁵ Ibid. p. 408.

BOOK much on the action of a bow on a tense string; IX. , and he adds these remarks on the effects of music:

> "Among all the sciences this is more commendable, courtly, pleasing, mirthful, and lovely. It makes a man liberal, cheerful, courteous, glad, amiable. It rouses him to battle. It exhorts him to bear fatigue. 'It comforts him under labour. It refreshes the disturbed mind; takes away head-aches and sorrow; and dispels the depraved humours and the desponding spirit." 16

> Dunstan, great in all the knowledge of his day, as well as in his ambition, is described to have made an organ of brass pipes, elaborated by musical measures, and filled with air from the bellows. 17 The bells he made have been mentioned before. About the same time we have the description of an organ made in the church at Ramsey.

> "The earl devoted thirty pounds to make the copper pipes of organs, which, resting with their openings in thick order on the spiral winding in the inside, and being struck on feast days with the strong blast of bellows, emit a sweet melody and a far-resounding peal." 18

> In 669, Theodore and Adrian, who planted learning among the Anglo-Saxons, also introduced into Kent the ecclesiastical chanting, which Gregory the Great had much improved. From Kent it was carried into the other English churches. In 678, one John came also from Rome, and taught in his monastery the Roman mode of singing, and was directed by the pope

^{*6} Bede Op. vol. viii. p. 417, 418.

^{17 3} Gale, 366. 38 Ibid. 420.

to diffuse it amongst the rest of the clergy, and CHAP. left written directions to perpetuate it. Under his auspices it became a popular study in the Saxon monasteries. 19

We have a pleasing proof of the impressive effect of the sacred music of the monks, in the little poem which Canute the Great made upon it. As the monarch, with his queen and courtiers, were approaching Ely, the monks were at their devotions. The king, attracted by the melody, ordered his rowers to approach it, and to move gently while he listened to the sounds which came floating through the air from the church on the high rock before him. He was so delighted by the effect, that he made a poem on the occasion, of which the first stanza only has come down to us. 20

THERE are many ancient MSS. of the Anglo-Saxon times, which contain musical notes.

THE musical talents of Alfred and Anlaf have been noticed in this history.

The progress of the Anglo-Saxons in the art Their of design and painting was not very considerable. The talents of their artists varied. The numerous coloured drawings of plants to the Herbarium of Apuleius have merit for the time; but the animals in the same MS. are ²¹ indifferent. There are also coloured drawings of the things

¹⁹ See Bede, iv. 2. 18.; v. 22.

²⁰ See before.

²¹ Cott. Lib. MSS. Vitel. C. 3.

BOOK fabled to be in the East, in two MSS.22 The drawings to Cædmon show little skill. 23 Many MSS, have the decorations of figures; as the Saxon Calendar, the Gospels, Psalters, and others.24 The account of the stars, from Cicero's translation of Aratus, contains some very elegant images. 25 A portrait of Dunstan is attempted in one MS. 26 They all exhibit hard outlines.

> Rome, the great fountain of literature, art, and science, to all the west of Europe, in these barbaric ages, furnished England with her productions in this art. Augustin brought with him from Rome a picture of Christ; and Benedict, in 678, imported from Rome pictures of the Virgin, and of the twelve Apostles, some of the histories in the Evangelists, and some from the subjects in the Apocalypse. These were placed in different parts of the church. In 685 he obtained new supplies of the graphic art. Bede calls them pictures from the Old and New Testament, "executed with wonderful art and wisdom." He mentions four of these, which were believed to have a typical concordance. The picture of Isaac carrying the wood on which he was to be sacrificed, was placed near the representation of Christ carrying his cross. So

³² MS. Tib. B. 5.

²⁴ Ibid. 23 Cott. MSS.

²⁵ MS. Cal. A.7. Tib. B. 5. Nero, D. 4.

²⁶ MS. Claud. A. 3.

the Serpent exalted by Moses was approximated CHAP. to the Crucifixion. 27

Dunstan excelled in this as in the other arts. He'is stated to have diligently cultivated the art of painting, and to have painted for a lady a robe, which she afterwards 28 embroidered. There is a drawing of Christ, with himself kneeling at his feet, of his own performance in the Bodleian Library, 29

THE Anglo-Saxons were fond of beautifying their MSS. with drawings with ink of various colours, coloured parchment, and sometimes with gilt letters. The Gospels, Nero, D. 4., exhibit a splendid instance of these ornaments. The Franco-theotisc Gospels, Calig. A. 7., are also highly decorated. Many Saxon MSS. in the Cotton Library exhibit very expensive, and what in those days were thought beautiful illuminations. The art of doing these ornaments has been long in disuse; but some of the recipes for the materials have been preserved.

THEY prepared their parchment by this rule · -

" Put it under lime, and let it lie for three days; then stretch it, scrape it well on both sides, and dry it, and then stain it with the colours you wish." 30

To gild their skins, we have these directions: -

" Take the red skin and carefully pumice it, and temper it in tepid water, and pour the water on it till it runs off

²⁷ Bede Abb. Wer. 295. 297. ²⁸ MS. Cleop. B. 13.

³º Muratori, t. ii. p. 370. ²⁹ Hickes, p. 144. KK

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BOOK limpid. Stretch it afterwards, and smooth it diligently with clean wood. When it is dry, take the whites of eggs, and smear it therewith thoroughly; when it is dry, sponge it with water, press it, dry it again and polish it; then rub it with a clean skin, and polish it again, and gild it." 3x

> THE receipts for their gold writing have been mentioned in the chapter on their sciences.

> OF their sculpture and engraving we know little. Their rings and ornamented horns, and the jewel of Alfred, found in the isle of Athelney 32, show that they had the art of engraving on metals and other substances with much neatness of mechanical execution, though with little taste or design.

Their architecture.

THAT the Anglo-Saxons had some sort of architecture in use before they invaded Britain cannot be doubted, if we recollect that every other circumstance about them attests that they were by no means in the state of absolute barbarism. They lived in edifices, and worshipped in temples raised by their own skill. The temple which Charlemagne destroyed at Eresberg, in the 8th century, is described in terms which imply at least greatness; and if we consult their language we shall find that they had indigenous expressions concerning their buildings, which is evidence that the things which they designate were in familiar use. 33

³¹ Muratori, t. ii. p. 376.

³³ See Hickes's Thesaurus.

³³ Their term for window is rather curious; it is ehrhypl, literally an eye-hole. Dr. Clarke says of the poorer sort of

The verb which they commonly used when they spoke of building, satisfactorily shows us that their ancient erections were of wood. It is getymbrian, 'to make of wood.' Where Bede says of any one that he built a monastery or a church, Alfred translates it getimbrade. So appropriated was the word to building, that even when they became accustomed to stone edifices they still retained it, though, when considered as to its original meaning, it then expressed an absurdity; for the Saxon Chronicle says of a person, that he promised to getembrian a church of stone 34, which literally would imply that he made of wood a stone church. Alfred uses it in the same manner.

The first Saxon churches of our island were all built of wood. ³⁵ The first church in Northumbria was built of wood. So the one of Holy Island. ³⁶ The church at Durham was built of split oak, and covered with reeds like those of the Scots. ³⁷ In Greensted church in Essex, the most ancient part, the nave or body of this church, was entirely composed of the trunks of large oaks split, and rough hewed on both sides. They were set upright and close to each other,

Russian towns, "a window in such places is a mark of distinction and seldom seen. The houses in general have only small holes, through which, as you drive by, you see a head stuck as in a pillory." This description may explain the Saxon "eh-thypl."

³⁴ Sax. Chron. p. 23.

³⁵ Bede, iii. 25.

³⁶ Bede, iii. 4.

³⁷ Ibid.

BOOK being let into a sill at the bottom, and a plate at the top, where they were fastened with wooden pins. "This," says Ducarel, "was the whole of the original church, which yet remains entire, though much corroded and worn by length of time. It is 29 feet 9 inches long, and 5 feet 6 inches high on the sides, which supported the primitive roof." 38

> REMAINS of Roman architecture have been found in various parts of England. In Mr. Carter's Ancient Architecture of England, and in the publications of Mr. Lysons, may be seen several fragments of a Roman temple and other buildings lately dug up at Bath and elsewhere; which show that our ancestors, when they settled in England, had very striking specimens of Roman architecture before them, which must have taught them to despise their own rude performances, and to wish to imitate nobler models.

THE circles of stones which are found in Cornwall, Oxfordshire, and Derbyshire, as well as the similar ones in Westphalia, Brunswick, and Alsatia, which Keysler mentions 39, show rather the absence than the knowledge of architectural science. They are placed by mere strength, without skill; they prove labour and caprice, but no art.

STONEHENGE is certainly a performance which

³⁸ Ducarel's Anglo-Norman Antiquities, p. 100.

³⁹ Antiq. Septent. p. 5-10.

exhibits more workmanship and contrivance. The stones of the first and third circles have tenons which fit to mortises in the stones incumbent. They are also shaped, though into mere simple upright stones, and the circles they describe have considerable regularity. But as it is far more probable that they were raised by the ancient Britons than by Anglo-Saxons, they need not be argued upon here.

If the Roman buildings extant in Britain had been insufficient to improve the taste, and excite the emulation of the Saxons, yet the arrival of the Roman clergy, which occurred in the 7th century, must have contributed to this effect.

It is true, that architecture as well as all the arts declined, even at Rome, after the irruption of the barbaric tribes. It is however a just opinion of Muratori 4°, that the arts, whose exercise is necessary to life, could never utterly perish. To build houses for domestic convenience, and places, however rude, for religious worship, exacted some contrivance. But there is a great distinction between the edifices of necessity, and those of cultivated art. Strong walls, well-covered roofs, and a division of apartments; whatever simple thought, profuse expense, and great labour could produce, appeared in all parts of Europe during the barbarian ages: but symmetry and right disposition of

BOOK parts, the plans of elegant convenience, of IX. beauty and tasteful ornament, were unknown to both Roman and Saxon architects, from the 6th century to very recent periods.

> But if the science and practice of Roman and Grecian architecture declined at Rome, with its political empire, and the erections of barbaric ignorance and barbaric taste appeared instead; the effect, which we are to expect would result from our ancestors becoming acquainted with the Roman models, was rather a desire for great and striking architecture, than an exact imitation of the beauty they admired. Correct and elegant architecture requires that the mind of the designer and superintendant should be cultivated with a peculiar degree of geometrical science and general taste. Masons capable of executing whatever genius may conceive, are not alone sufficient. Of these there must have been no want, in the most barbarous ages of Europe. They who could raise the stupendous monasteries and cathedrals which we read of or have seen, could have equally reared the more elegant buildings of ancient art, if an architect had existed who could have given their labour and ingenuity the requisite direction. A Wren, or a Vitruvius was wanted, not able workmen. The disciplined mind and cultured taste, not the manual dexterity.

> THE arts of life are found to flourish in proportion as their productions are valued and required. When the Anglo-Saxons became con

verted to Christianity, they wanted monasteries CHAP. and churches. And this demand for architectural ability would have produced great perfection in the art, if the state of the other arts and sciences had permitted a due cultivation of genius in this; but no single art can attain perfection if every other be neglected, or if general ignorance enfeeble and darken the mind. Patronage therefore, though it called forth whatever mechanical labour and unlettered mind could fabricate, could not miraculously create taste and regular science. The love of sublimity is more congenial to the rude beroism of infant civilisation, and therefore our ancient architecture often reached to the sublime: but while we admire its vastness, its solidity, and its magnificence, we smile at its irregularities, its discordancies, and its caprice.

The chief peculiarities of the Anglo-Saxon architecture, of which several specimens, though in fragments, exist, are declared to be a want of uniformity of parts, massy columns, semi-circular arches, and diagonal mouldings. 41 Of these the two first are common to all the barbaric architecture of Europe. But the semi-circular arches and diagonal mouldings seem to have been more peculiar additions to the Saxon building.

THAT the round arches were borrowed from Roman buildings, is the prevailing sentiment.

⁴¹ See Carter's Ancient Architecture.

BOOK It is at least a fact, that the Saxons must have seen them among the numerous specimens of the imperial architecture which they found in England.

> THE universal diagonal ornament, or zig-zag moulding, which is a very distinguishing trait of the Saxon architecture, is found disposed in two ways; one with its point projecting outwards, and the other with its point lying so as to follow the lines which circumscribe it, either horizontal, perpendicular, or circular.42

> On this singular ornament an etymological remark may be hazarded, as it may tend to elucidate its origin. The Saxon word used to denote the adorning of a building is gefrætwian, or frætwan; and an ornament is frætew; but frætan signifies to gnaw or to eat; and upon our recollecting that the diagonal ornament of Saxon building is an exact imitation of teeth, we can hardly refrain from supposing that the ornament was an intended imitation of teeth. Frætew and frætwung, which they used to signify ornament, may be construed fretwork, or teeth-work. The teeth which the Saxon diagonals represent, are, I believe, marine teeth. If so, perhaps they arose from the stringing of teeth of the large sea animals.

> WE will mention a few of the ancient Saxon buildings we meet with, and show how they are described.

⁴² See Carter's Ancient Architecture, p. 15.

In 627 Paulinus built the first Christian church, in Northumbria, of wood; it was afterwards rebuilt on a larger scale, and with stone: he also built a stone church at Lincoln. His church at York was not very skilfully erected; for in less than a century afterwards, Wilfrid found its stony offices half destroyed; its roof was permeable to moisture. It had windows of fine linen cloth, or latticed wood-work; but no glazed casements, and therefore the birds flew in and out, and made nests in it. 43 So Bede says of his church at Lincoln, that though the walls were standing, the roof had fallen down. 44

CHAP.

In 676 Benedict sought cementarios, or masons, to make a church in the Roman manner, which he loved. But the Roman manner seems not to express the Roman science and taste, but rather a work of stone, and of the large size which the Romans used. It was finished in a year after its foundation.⁴⁵

At this period glass-makers were not known among the Saxons. But Benedict had heard of them, and he sent to Gaul for some, to make latticed windows to the porticoes and cænaculum of the church. From those whom he employed the Saxons learned the art. 46

In the 7th century, Cuthbert built a monastery, which is described. From wall to wall it was of four or five perches. The outside was higher than a standing man. The wall was not made of cut stone, or bricks and cement, but of unpolished stones and turf, which they had dug from the spot. Some of the stones four men could hardly lift. The roofs were made of wood and clay.⁴⁷

As their architectural practice improved, they chose better materials. Thus Firman took from the church at Durham its thatched roof, and covered it with plates of lead. 48

About 709, Wilfrid flourished. He, like many others, had travelled to Rome, and of course beheld the most valuable specimens of ancient art. He brought thence some masons and artificers. ⁴⁹ Though he could not imitate these, he sought to improve the efforts of his countrymen. The church of Paulinus at York he completely repaired. He covered

⁴³ Malmsb. 149. 44 Bede, ii. 16. 45 Ib. p. 295.

⁴⁶ Bede, p. 295. 47 Ib. 243. 48 Ib. 25.

⁴⁹ Malmsb. lib. iii.

BOOK the roof with pure lead, he washed its walls from their dirt, and by glass windows (to use the words of my author) he kept out the birds and rain, and vet admitted light.

At Ripon he also erected a church with polished stone. adorned with various columns and porticoes. At Hexham he made a similar building. It was founded deep, and made of polished stones, with many columns and porticoes, adorned with great length and height of walls. It had many windings, both above and below, carried spirally round. It was superior to any edifice on this side of the Alps. In the inside was a stony pavement, on which a workman fell from a scaffold of enormous height, 50

In 716, we read of Croyland monastery. The marshy ground would not sustain a stony mass. The king therefore had a vast number of piles of oak and alders fixed in the ground, and earth was brought in boats nine miles off to be mingled with the timber and the marsh, to complete the foundation, 51

In 969, a church was built. The preceding winter was employed in preparing the iron and wooden instruments, and all other necessaries. The most skilful artificers were then brought. The length and breadth of the church were measured out, deep foundations were laid on account of the neighbouring moisture, and they were strengthened by frequent percussions of the rams. While some workmen carried stones, others made cement, and others raised both aloft by a machine with a wheel. Two towers with their tops soon rose, of which the smaller was visible on the west in the front of the church. The larger in the middle with four spires, pressed on four columns, connected together by arches passing from one to the other, that they might not separate.53

It is supposed that many specimens of ancient Saxon architecture yet remain; as part of St. Peter's at Oxford, part of St. Alban's abbey church, Tickencote church, near Stamford in Lincolnshire, the porch on the south side of Shireburn minster, Barfreston church, in Kent, Iffley church, and some others. But the works and delineations of professional men must be consulted on this subject.

^{5°} Eddius, Vita Wilfridi, 59-63.

⁵¹ Ingulf, p. 4. 53 3 Gale, 399.

BOOK X.

THEIR RELIGION.

CHAP. I.

Utility and Decline of Saxon Paganism, and the introduction of Christianity among the Anglo-SAXONS. — Its general effect.

THE religion of the Saxons while on the CHAP. Continent, has been delineated in the Appendix to the first volume of this history. With that martial superstition they came into Britain. They found the island in a peculiar state on this impressive subject. In many towns and stations, they met with tomb-stones, altars. and other lapidary inscriptions; images, temples, and public works dedicated to several of the imaginary deities, which Rome in her paganism, and her allies had worshipped. The majority of the Britons were professing Christianity, and had sent bishops to the councils on the Conti-But the Druidism which yet had its regular temples in Bretagne, was lingering in some corners of the island, and was still by its



BOOK traditions and mysticism, materially affecting the minds of the British bards of that period. Many of the remaining poems of Taliesin, and some passages in those of Llywarch Hen, show that mixture of the ancient Druidical feeling with their Christian faith, which evinces that their minds were a confused medley of opinions and sentiments from both sources, and therefore too fantastic to benefit or interest their Saxon conquerors, or to care for their improvement. The British clergy, as drawn by one of themselves at that time, were by their vices, ignorance, and profligacy, still less qualified than the bards to impress the fierce descendants of Odin with either the morals or the belief of Christianity.

> When we observe the many forms of idolatrous superstitions that have governed and still interest the human mind in so many parts, and for so many ages, and reflect on the vast reasoning powers of man, and on the highlygifted individuals who have believed and supported such errors and absurdities, we are astonished at their predominance. But the fact of their long prevalence is evidence that it has been a natural direction of the human mind, and will induce the unprejudiced philosopher to presume that it cannot have been unuseful.

WE may refer the rise and diffusion of the various systems to many causes. Accident, caprice, reasoning, imagination, policy, hope, fear; and the love of agitation and enjoyment,

have suggested many rites and notions. Vanity, CHAP. enthusiasm, craft, and selfishness have given rise to others. But the feelings of the sincere votaries who have professed them have been always natural and usually well-intentioned. The dread of evil, and the expectation of averting it; gratitude for good enjoyed, anxiety at the vicissitudes of life, and the desire of a protector; grief under poignant sorrow, and the heart's craving for a comforter; regret for faults committed; a sense of imperfection and unworthiness; an awful impression of the majesty, as well as the power of the invisible Deity; the wish for an intercessor; the bitterness of disappointment, and the sentiment of the ultimate insufficiency of the riches, pleasures, and ambition of life to satisfy the mature and experienced mind; -these feelings have, in all times and places, concurred with other impressions to lead mankind to adopt with eagerness whatever system of deprecation, adoration, expiation, reconcilement, and supplication was most accessible, most habitual, or most recommended to their attention. It is upon their feelings, rather than upon their reason, that mankind base their belief, not in religion alone, but in all things which they accredit or uphold.

No paganism could, according to the nature of things, have subsisted long, or would have been permitted to subsist, unless some temporary utility had accompanied it. The religion of every country being the creature, or the



BOOK adoption, of its feelings and intellect, must correspond with their state and tendencies. It must partake of their imperfections, and improve as they do. But all forms of paganism are the antagonists of atheism, and of its counterpart, a disbelief of the moral government of the Deity. Although paganism attaches the feelings and opinions to imaginary beings, yet it preserves, in the general mind the impression of a Divine power and providence, interested by human conduct, and superintending human concerns; commanding nature, punishing crimes, imposing precepts; irresistible, yet placable; and on whose distribution all the good and evil of life continually depend. The greatest mistakes of reasoning have been connected with these impressions. But, with all their evils, they have kept both the uncultivated and refined mind of the world from surrendering the command of its energies and feelings to the government of atheism; and thus have preserved society from that dreadful state of selfishness, bloodshed, violence, and profligacy, which must have resulted if universal atheism had pervaded it; and which, as far as reasoning can extend its foresight, must accompany the universal diffusion of a system so disconsolatory.

But, independently of this general benefit, almost every system of paganism, if closely examined, will be found to contain some valuable principles or feelings that half-redeem its follies. The lofty theism, and sublime, though

wild, traditions of the Northmen we have already CHAP. noticed from their Voluspa and Edda. It is most probable that in these we read the sentiments of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers. It would indeed seem that both the British Druids and the Saxon Pagans, had as high a sense of the Supreme Deity as some of the Orphic verses show to have existed in some of the minds of ancient Greece. I infer this, as to the Britons. from the remarkable circumstance that the most ancient British bards, and those of the middle ages, whatever be the subject of their poems, made it their usual custom to begin them with an address to the Deity, or to insert some expressions of veneration to him, containing not only ideas derived from Christianity, but often others that are more referable to the notions of their Druidical ancestors. In the Saxon poems that remain we find, in the same spirit, many metaphors and much periphrasis on the Deity, which seem to be the effusions of their more ancient feelings; and fragments, or mutations, of some part of their pagan hymns.

But all the religious systems of the ancient pagan world were naturally perishable, from the quantity of false opinions and vicious habits and ceremonies that were attached to them. Human judgment may, for a time, be deceived, cor-

² The poems of Taliesin, Meilyr, Gwalchmai, Cynddelw, Llywarch ap Moc, Casnodyn, Dafydd y Coed, Griffith ab Mared, and others, abound with instances of this poetical piety.



BOOK rupted, or overpowered; but its tendency to right action is so strong, and so indestructible, that no error can be permanent. The reign of what is untrue or unjust may be longer or shorter according to the pressure of incumbent circumstances; but the mind is always struggling to attain every attainable good, and therefore to appropriate to itself every new truth that becomes visible. Hence, as we have before remarked, it had begun to discern the imperfections of its Saxon paganism before Christianity came within its reach; and as soon as this new system was presented fully to its contemplation, the Anglo-Saxon mind discerned its superiority, and was not unduly tardy in adopting it.

> It has been remarked of the Christian religion, that it neither arose from ambition, nor was propagated by the sword. It appealed unoffendingly to the reason, the sensibility, the virtue, and the interest of mankind; and, in opposition to all that was venerated or disputed, maintained by power, or believed by the populace, it peaceably established itself in every province of the Roman empire; as, by the same means, it is now penetrating every region of the globe.

> Among the Anglo-Saxons, its conquest over the fierce paganism which our ancestors upheld, was not begun till both Ireland and France had submitted to her laws; but it was accomplished in a manner worthy of its benevolence and purity, as we have already detailed in the reigns of Ethelbert and Edwin.

GENUINE piety led the first missionaries to our CHAP. shores. Their zeal, their perseverance, and the excellence of the system they diffused, notwithstanding some peculiarities which, in conformity with their own taste, and with that of their age, they attached to it, made their labours successful.

How long the Saxon paganism continued among individuals in each district, after it ceased to be the religious establishment of the government, there are no materials for ascertaining. It was too irrational to have maintained a protracted contest with Christianity; but though it may have ceased to have had its temples and priests, or any visible existence, yet the influence of its prejudices, and of the habits it had generated, continued long to operate. These became insensibly mixed with so much of Christianity as each understood, and produced that motley character in religion and morals, which was so often displayed in the Anglo-Saxon period.

But Christianity was a positive benefit to the nation, in every degree of its prevalence. Wherever it has penetrated, like the Guardian Angel of the human race, it has meliorated the heart and enlightened the understanding; and hence has become the religion of the most cultivated portions of the globe.

EVERY part of its moral system is directed to soften the asperities of the human character, to remove its selfishness, to intellectualise its sensualities, to restrain its malignity, and to animate



BOOK its virtues. If it did not eradicate all the vices of the Anglo-Saxon by whom it was professed, it taught him to abandon many. It exhibited to his contemplation the idea of what human nature ought to be, and may attain. It gradually implanted a moral sense in his bosom, and taught his mind the habit of moral reasoning, and its application to life. It could not be known unless some portion of literature was attained or diffused. It therefore actually introduced learning into England, and taught the Anglo-Saxons to cultivate intellectual pursuits.

> On the enslaved poor of the country its effects were most benign. It was always contributing to their emancipation, by urging their lords to grant this blessing as an act beneficial to their state after death; and while slavery continued in the country, the master was humanised, and the bondmen consoled, wherever Christianity was admitted and obeyed.

> THE effects of Christianity, in diminishing the superstitions of the day, were also considerable. The credulous fancies of an unlettered people are very gross, and usually hold the understanding in chains, from which it is difficult to emerge. The conversion of the nation destroyed this brutish slavery, and greatly strengthened and enlarged its general intellect. Monkish superstitions introduced other follies; but the literature which accompanied them dispelled them as it spread, and reason in every age gained new conquests, which she never lost. Indeed, in

nothing was the new religion more strikingly CHAP. beneficial, than by introducing a moral and intellectual education. This could have neither been known nor understood till Christianity displayed the value, imparted the means, and produced the habit of adopting it.

THE political effects of Christianity in England were as good as they could be in that age of general darkness; but it must be confessed that they were not so beneficial as its individual influence; and yet we are indebted for it to chivalry, and the high-minded tone of spirit and character which that produced. We owe to its professors all the improvement that we have derived from the civil law, which they discovered, revived, explained, and patronised. Nor has Christianity been unserviceable to our constitutional liberty: every battle which the churchman fought against the king or noble was for the advantage of general freedom; and by rearing an ecclesiastical power, which at one time opposed the king, and at another the aristocracy of the chiefs, it certainly favoured the rise of the political importance and influence of the middle and lower classes of the people. The independence, and even the ambition, of the church could not be asserted without checking the royal power; and such opposition repeatedly compelled the crown to court popularity as its surest defence.

THE defects which often accompanied these benefits, were the faults of a very partially en-



BOOK lightened age; of tempers sometimes sincerely zealous, and sometimes ambitiously selfish, but always violent and irascible; and of the system into which Christianity was distorted. They did not spring from the religion inculcated by the Scriptures. Monkish and papal Christianity became, in every age after the seventh, something different from Apostolical Christianity. Religion, although enjoined by its Divine Author to be made the governing principle of life, is not ordered to become the exclusive one. Formed to suit, to influence, and to adorn every class of society, it mixes gracefully with every innocent pleasure which virtue sanctions; with every accomplishment which refined intellect values; and with all that business which life requires, and which enlightened prudence would cultivate. It forbids only, in every pursuit, that monopolising absorption of mind which cannot be indulged without debasing ourselves or injuring others. It aims to form us to a species of celestial intellect, and celestial sensibility. Its true offspring is not the gloomy ascetic fasting into atrophy in the solitude of a desert; nor the self-tormenting monk mortifying himself into imbecility, and mistaking delirium for inspiration. Its object is to lead us to a gradual approximation towards the Divine perfections; and its tuition for this purpose, is that of parental tenderness and affectionate wisdom, imposing no restraints but such as accelerate our improvements; and distressing us with no vicissitudes

but those which tend to make our happiness CHAP. compatible with our virtue, and to render human life a series of continual progression. tentive to these great objects of the Christian Legislator, the papal hierarchy, from accident, fanaticism, and policy, pursued too often a spurious plan of forcing mankind to become technical automatons of rites and dreams; words and superstitions; and supported a system which, if not originally framed, was at least applied to enforce a long-continued exertion of transferring the government of the world into the hands of ecclesiastics, and too often superseding the Christianity of the Gospels by that of tradition, policy, half-delirious bigotry, feelings often fantastic, and unenlightened enthusiasm. The noblest aspirations of devout sensibility were sometimes combined with these inventions. But the mischievous additions usually formed the prevailing character of the multitude.

CHAP, II.

Anglo-Saxons become Missionaries to other Nations.

version of nations.

BOOK COON after the Anglo-Saxons had been converted to Christianity they became anxious Their con- to spread its consolations among their Continental ancestors, and the neighbouring nations.

> WILLEBROD, with eleven of his companions, went as missionaries from England to Heligoland and Friesland in 692; and was made bishop of the city now called Utrecht. His associates spread Christianity among the Westphalians and their neighbours. Boniface, in 715, left our island to convert the Germans: he preached to the Thuringians, Hessians, and others. founded the bishoprics of Wurtzburg, Buraburg, Erfurt, and Erchstadt. In 744 he raised the celebrated monastery of Fulda; and in 746, was made archbishop of Mentz. Returning to Friesland, in 755, he was there murdered, with fifty ecclesiastics who accompanied him. He had converted above one hundred thousand Germans.2 Lebuin was another Englishman

² Alcuin, Vita Willeb.

² See his Letters. 15 Bib. Mag. Pat.; and see Mosheim Eccl. Hist. cent. 8.

who attempted to become a missionary; and CHAP. Adalbert, son of a king of the Northumbrian kingdom of Deiri, in 790, went to Germany for the same purpose.³

We have an intimation of the plan of instruction which they adopted for the change of the pagan mind in the following judicious directions of Alcuin for a progressive information:—

"This order should be pursued in teaching mature persons: 1st. They should be instructed in the immortality of the soul; in the future life; in its retribution of good and evil, and in the eternal duration of both conditions.

"2d. They should then be informed for what sins and crimes they will have to suffer with the Devil everlasting punishments; and for what good and beneficial deeds they will enjoy unceasing glory with Christ.

"3d. The faith of the Holy Trinity is then to be most diligently taught: and the coming of our Saviour into the world for the salvation of the human race. Afterwards impress the mystery of his passion; the truth of his resurrection; His glorious ascension; His future advent to judge all nations, and the resurrection of our bodies.

"Thus prepared and strengthened, the man may be baptized." 4

³ Tanner, Not. Mon. 4. Ireland was also successful in its missionary exertions. Its Columbanus taught in Gaul, and among the Suevi and Boioi; one of his companions, St. Gall, converted many of the Helvetii and Suevi; and St. Kilian visited the Eastern Franks.

⁴ Alc. Op. p. 1484.

CHAP. III.

View of the Form of Christianity introduced among the Anglo-Saxons; and of some of the Religious Rites and Notions.

BOOK THE form and spirit of Christianity introduced among the Anglo-Saxons by Gregory's monks were unquestionably the best which he and the Roman church then knew and valued. And as the form and spirit of every institution arise from the mind and disposition of some portion of its contemporaries, and are adapted to their feelings or occasions, so we may assume that the doctrines, rites, and formulæ of Christianity, which the papal see established in England in the seventh century, were congenial with the mind, character, taste, and circumstances of the nation, and of Europe at that period. It is therefore no reproach to the memory of Gregory or of his missionaries, if we now appreciate differently the merit of what they taught with the most benevolent integrity and with merited success. The world has become a new world of knowledge, feeling, taste, habit, and reason since that period. Their religious education suited their comparative babyhood of knowledge and intellect, and formed an interesting and improving child. New agencies oc. CHAP. curred afterwards to rear this infant to a noble youth. Better views of religion have since united with expanded science and progressive reason to conduct the national character and mind to a still superior manhood. Each preceding stage was necessary to the formation of the subsequent. Each has produced its appropriate utilities, and each has passed away from our estimation as soon as higher degrees of improvement were attained, and better systems became visible. The Scriptures are the imperishable records of our faith and hope; and if their lessons only had been allowed to be the guides of man's opinions and practice, all the absurdities and superstitions which we lament or ridicule would have been prevented or soon removed. But in every age the human mind has chosen to blend religion with its own dreams and passions; and has made these, and not the Gospel, the paramount, though always erring, dictators of our theological knowledge and religious sensibility. It is the glory of the present age, that the cultivated understanding is emancipating itself from all the dogmatism and prejudices both of scepticism and superstition, and is advancing to those just and clear views of impartial truth, which will unite faith with philosophy, knowledge with hope, and self-comfort with an active, kind, and magnanimous charity.

WITH these views we may smile without insult at some of the questions, and condemn with-

BOOK out bitterness others, on which Augustine requests the directions of Gregory, as to the ecclesiastical government, discipline, rules, and restrictions to which he is to subject his new converts. We are surprised that some of the points adverted to should have been made the subjects of sacerdotal notice; but the gravity and earnestness with which they are put and answered, show that they were then deemed proper objects of such attention, and were considered by priest and votary to be important and interesting to the consciences of both.

> ¹ See Bede's 27th chapter of his first book, of which the eighth and ninth articles are the most objectionable. But there is a liberality in the pope's answer to the second question that deserves notice. "You know the custom of the Roman church, in which you remember you was brought up. But I am willing, if you have found any thing in the Roman, or Gallican, or in any other church, which will be more pleasing to the Almighty, that you carefully select it; and infuse into the English church, which is yet new in the faith, in its leading institution, those things which you may have collected from many churches. Things are not to be loved for places, but places for good things. Choose then from every church whatever things are pious, religious, and right, and, collecting them as into a bundle, place them as a habit in the minds of the English." Bede, lib.i. c. 27. If the papal see had continued to act on this wise rule, as society advanced, it would have improved with every succeeding age, and have still held the dominion of the religious world. But it ever afterwards deviated into a narrow, peculiar, and unchangeable system, that has become in every following generation more incompatible with the human progress; and thus it has irretrievably lost the government of the intellectual world. A new and wiser system, that has yet to receive its being, can alone obtain that universal sceptre to which both ancient and modern Rome so long aspired, and for a brief interval attained.

THE detail of all the ecclesiastical rites and CHAP. notions of the Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastics would, be tedious and unimproving in a general history. They have been discussed and disputed professionally by some, and as matters of antiquarian curiosity by others. The present chapter will be limited to the selection of a few points, on which some original information can be given, and which may be more interesting to the philosophical reader.

Among the religious institutions of the Anglo- Their mo-Saxons their monastic establishments attained a great though fluctuating popularity. In the first period of their Christianity, when a general ardour of belief impelled those who sincerely embraced it, several kings and nobles withdrew from the business and vexations of the world to enjoy the devout serenity of the cloister. Such a taste has been too hastily censured as a mental imbecility. The system of monasteries, though pernicious when abused, and defective in its intellectual regulations, yet contained much that was fairly interesting both to the imagination and the heart of the Anglo-Saxons, and that actually contributed to increase the happiness of life in their day. Even now, in the opinion of many thinking men, if they were confined to the middle and declining periods of life; if they were frequented by those only, who, after having discharged all their social duties, desired to withdraw from the occupations, troubles, and fascinations of the world, to a halcyon calm of mind,



BOOK uninterrupted study, tranquil meditation, or devotional sensibility; if they were not shackled by indissoluble vows of continuance, imprisoning the repining; if they were made seminaries of education, and allowed to be temporary asylums of unprovided youth; and if their rules and habits were framed on such moral plans and religious formulæ as should be found worthy of an intellectual age, which seeks to combine the fancy and the feeling in a sweet harmony with its knowledge and its reason: thus formed and directed, such institutions might again contribute to the happiness of the aged, the destitute, the sorrowful, the lonely, the abstracted, the studious, the pensive, the unambitious, the embarrassed, and the devout, as well as to the instruction of the young, the relief of the poor, and the revival of religious sensibility in the community at large.

But when they were founded among the Anglo-Saxons, mankind had not attained or noticed the experience of all their effects; and the visible good, which they achieved, prevented their evils from being felt; or, if they were discerned, no better means then occurred of acquiring elsewhere their manifest advantages. Our ancestors did not perceive that they were opposed to the social duties and general improvement of mankind, by admitting the young and active; by compelling the self-sacrifice to last for life; by a series of religious ordinances that became mechanical rote; by a slavish discipline

and unimproving habits; by their discourage-CHAP. ment of liberal feelings and an enlarged cultivation of the intellect; and by legends, bigotry, superstitious tenets and prejudices, which as much poisoned the mind as the increasing corruptions and ambition which they fed and fomented, deteriorated the conduct. Of these ill effects many were the growth of time, others of ignorance, and some of the circumstances in which former ages had been involved. But as they began the mental and moral education of the country, and carried it on successfully to a certain point; as they fostered and diffused that religious spirit, without which, as without them, the Anglo-Saxons would not have long retained their Christianity; and as they made the hierarchy a stronger bulwark against the violence of the great at one time, and the oppressions of the throne at another; these establishments were for a long time of incalculable utility. Having become incompatible with the improved reason, new state, and present duties of mankind, the downfall of their ancient system in the present age, was as necessary as their elevation had been expedient. To suit the present wants and progress of society, they must, if ever introduced again, be entirely new-created.

THE monastic scheme which the Anglo-Saxons adopted was that of St. Benedict; and it is impossible to read his rule without perceiving that it was the product of a mind aiming to do what seemed wisest and best. For above a century

BOOK the Anglo-Saxons warmly patronised monasteries. But the industry of their fraternities so much improved their possessions that they tempted the avarice not only of the less religious great, but of the other dignitaries of the church; and I have found among the works of our venerable Bede this complaint of their spoliation and

decay in his time.

"The possessions of monasteries were given to the monks that they and their servitors, and the poor and strangers who may arrive, should be nourished thereout. This care belongs to all Christians; but, I grieve to say it, nothing is more difficult to be believed, as well by the clergy as by laics, than that it is a sin to plunder the possessions of the monasteries, and to alienate them. - Attend, I beseech you, O rulers! Be exhorted to restore the destroyed monasteries: first, that the spoilers may return to the monks the property taken from them; then, that they who fear God and walk in his ways may be preferred to those who do not; for God is greatly offended, that those places which were emancipated and consecrated to him and his saints, should be destroyed from the carelessness of the governors. If those serving God in monasteries had whatever was necessary to them, they could pursue their divine duties with more alacrity; they could more devoutly intercede for the king, for the safety of the bishops and princes, and for all the church. But all these things are treated with such neglect by most bishops, that if a pure prayer, or rebuke, or seasonable admonition should be necessary, they disdain to notice it; caring only that pleasing and assiduous duties be done to themselves.

"It is to be much lamented, that since the lands which were formerly delivered to monasteries by religious princes, are now taken away by kings or bishops, no alms can be given there and no guest or stranger as feeded.

given there, and no guest or stranger refreshed.

"If they find monasteries destroyed by neglect of their spiritual or corporal provisions, they not only take no care to meliorate them, but even encourage the destruction." ²

^{*} Bede Op. vol. viii. p. 1071.

ALCUIN has a passage which intimates the CHAP. same decline. 3

THE ravages of the Danish invaders, who being martial pagans, exulted in burning Christian churches and cloisters, destroyed many monastic establishments: and though Alfred by his example encouraged the taste of building them, few were erected again till the reign of Edgar. Dunstan led his young mind to become their earnest patron; and the zeal for re-establishing them on the reformed plan, which had been adopted at Fleury in France, urged both the sovereign and his mitred preceptor to the greatest violences against the then existing clergy. Ethelwold, whom Dunstan procured to be made a bishop, had land given him for making a translation of the Latin Rule of St. Benedict into the Anglo-Saxon; and it was the boast of the king and his council, that they had founded forty monasteries by their exertions. We have a detail of the formation of one of these, from which some particulars are worth selecting, to preserve a memorial of the manner and progress by which such endowments were effected, and the principles on which they were recommended and patronised.

"On the death of a favourite nobleman of Edgar's court; his brother, an ealdorman, expressed to Bishop Oswald his desire to pursue a better system of life than his worldly occupations permitted. Oswald assured him that his secular

^{3 &}quot;We have seen in some places the altars without a roof, fouled by birds and dogs." Ep. p. 1487.

BOOK affairs would but give him so many opportunities of doing good, if he was careful to observe a conscientious spirit of equity, a merciful moderation, and a constant intention of right conduct. But he added that they only were free, serene, and released from all danger and anxiety, who renounced the world; and that their piety brought blessings on their country. 'By their merits the anger of the Supreme Judge is abated: a healthier atmosphere is granted: corn springs up more abundantly: famine and pestilence withdraw; the state is better governed; the prisons are opened; the fettered released; the shipwrecked are relieved; and the sick recover.' Oswald ended his speech by advising him, if he had any place in his territory fitted for a monastery, to build one upon it, promising to contribute to its maintenance.

> "The ealdorman replied, that he had some hereditary land surrounded with marshes, and remote from human intercourse. It was near a forest of various sorts of trees. which had several open spots of good turf, and others of fine grass for pasture. No buildings had been upon it, but some sheds for his herds, who had manured the soil.

> "They went together to view it. They found that the waters made it an island. It was so lonely, and yet had so many conveniences for subsistence and secluded devotion. that the bishop decided it to be an advisable station. Artificers were collected. The neighbourhood joined in the labour. Twelve monks came from another cloister to form the new fraternity. Their cells and a chapel were soon raised. In the next winter they provided the iron and timber, and utensils that were wanted for a handsome church. the spring, amid the fenny soil a firm foundation was laid. The workmen laboured as much from devotion as for profit. Some brought the stones; others made the cement; others applied to the wheel machinery that raised them on high: and in a reasonable time the sacred edifice with two towers appeared, on what had been before a desolate waste; and Abbo, celebrated for his literature, was invited from Fleury to take charge of the schools that were appended to it. Such was the formation of the Ramsey monastery.4"

⁴ Hist. Ram. p. 396-400.

The monastic establishments of Edgar were effected with too much violence and injustice to have good results. The truth is as old as the world, though rarely palatable to it, that evil means will have evil consequences. The former clergy were driven into an irascible opposition against the new system, and the discords which ensued from it among the nobles and nation, led to the second series of Danish invasions. From these so many disorders followed, that both monks and clergy declined into that low state of morals and mind, from which the Norman conquest afterwards rescued the religion of the country.

THE form of the hierarchy established among the Anglo-Saxons was episcopal. An archbishop, and bishops subordinate to him, and receiving the confirmation of their dignity or their spiritual investiture from the pope, were the rulers of the church; yet subject both to their own national as well as to general councils, and also in many points to the witena-gemot, of which they were a part, and, in their temporal concerns, to the king. Under the episcopal aristocracy, deans, archdeacons, canons, prebends, and the parochial clergy enjoyed various powers and privileges. The monks and nuns were governed by their own abbots, abbesses, and priors, assisted, and in some respects controlled, by conventual chapters; subject to, yet not always submitting to the pope, and claiming an independence on the episcopal clergy. There were

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BOOK no friars or mendicant orders among the Anglo-Saxons. But they encouraged hermits and pilgrims, and severe penances, and loved relics, and venerated saints, to whose number they largely contributed; and they practised excommunications.

Our limits will not allow us to give a full portraiture of the Anglo-Saxon hierarchy, and its rites and doctrines. A few points only can be mentioned here. But it may be remarked as some excuse for visible imperfections, that our Anglo-Saxon ancestors had every thing to construct on these subjects. Except some valuable gleams of patriarchal theism, which their poetical epithets for the Deity, that seem to have emanated from their paganism, imply that they retained, there was nothing in the idolatry of their ancestors that could assist them in the formation of their Christian system. They had every thing to learn on this new theme of mind; and they had to begin their pupilage in times of storm and darkness, both within and without them.

Reading of the Scriptures.

They were strongly exhorted to study the Scriptures. Instead of withholding these, their clergy earnestly pressed their frequent perusal, and gave the example themselves. Bede employed himself like our Alfred, in making moral and religious selections from them, and also commented on each of their books. Alcuin repeatedly presses their perusal, especially the Gospels 5; and urges the contemplation of our

⁵ To one he says, "Scribe Evangelicum in corde tuo," p. 1635. To another, "I wish the four Gospels instead of

Saviour's life and precepts. 6 His high and just CHAP. estimate of the Psalms is very interestingly expressed.7 Every priest was ordered to have the "halzan bec," the sacred books, that "he might teach his people rightly who looked up to him;" and he was to take care that they were well written.8 Very ancient MSS. of Saxon translations of the Gospels, written between Alfred's times and Harold's still 9 exist. It was not only to gratify an Anglo-Saxon ealdorman 10, but also to enable the people at large

the twelve Æneids filled your breast," p. 1549. "Read diligently, I beseech you, the Gospels of Christ, p. 1561. "Be studious in reading the sacred Scriptures," p. 1583. "The reading of the sacred books is necessary," p. 1546.

⁶ Alcuin writes to a friend: "Study Christ as foretold in the books of the Prophets, and as exhibited in the Gospels; and when you find him, do not lose him; but introduce him into the home of thy heart, and make him the ruler of thy life. Love him as thy Redeemer, and thy Governor, and as the dispenser of all thy comforts. Keep his commandments, because in them is eternal life." Op. p. 1637.

⁷ See it in his Op. p. 123-126.

⁸ Lib. Can. Eccl. Wilk. p. 156.

⁹ Wanley mentions of Saxon MSS. one in the Bodleian library, p. 64.; two at Cambridge, p. 116 and 152.; and one in the British Museum, p. 211., in Latin and Saxon, p. 81. He notices one in the Bodleian, p. 250.; and the very beautiful MSS. just before mentioned, Nero, D. 4.; as also several Latin copies written in the Saxon times. One of these is the actual copy given by king Ethelstan to the church at Durham. It was in the British Museum, Otho, B. 9.

¹⁰ Elfric, in his prefatory Saxon epistle, says to him, "Thou badest me, dear one, that I should turn this book of Genesis from Latin to English." MSS. Camb. Wan. p. 162.

translation of the Scriptures from the Latin about the end of the tenth century. From the different styles of the Anglo-Saxon versions of the Gospels they must have been translated oftener than once.

Transubstantiation. It is certain that the transubstantiation of the Eucharist was not the established or universal belief of the Anglo-Saxons. In a MS. of Saxon Ecclesiastical Constitutions, it is declared, "the hurel (the sacrament) is Christ's body, not bodily, but spiritually; not the body in which he suffered, but the body about which he spoke when he blessed the loaf and wine."

Their relics.

THEY imbibed the well-intentioned but unwise taste for relics; a taste not only objectionable for the misplaced veneration of things not deserving of it, and fostering mysterious superstitions, which differed in name only from the magic and witchcraft which they were taught

In his Latin preface, Elfric says, he has translated the Scriptures from the Latin in the ordinary tongue, "for the edification of the simple, who know only this speech."—"We have therefore put it not into obscure words, but into simple English, that it may easier reach the heart of those who read or hear it." MSS. Camb. Wan. 153.

the time of the Conquest, in Wilkins, p.159. It adds: "Understand now, that as the Lord before his suffering might change the loaf to his body, and the wine to his blood, spiritually, so the same is daily blessed through the hands of the priest, the loaf to his body, and the wine to his blood spiritually," p.160. The same passage is given in Wanley, Cat. p.111.

to execrate, but also reprehensible for having CHAP. falsehood for its basis, and, like their legends, confounding all history and truth. The list of relics revered in one church, and stated to have been collected from abroad, and given to it by Athelstan, will afford a complete illustration of these remarks. 13

Although they used the sign of the cross Their use and its actual representation, they were taught cross. not to pray to the wood, but to the divine Personage who had suffered on it. 14

THAT the Anglo-Saxons were not contented Moral duwith mere ceremonial religion, the lives and their works of Aldhelm, Bede, Alcuin, Elfric, and

clergy.

23 It would be too long to give the whole of this Anglo-Saxon document. Some of its chief articles are: a piece of the actual cross; a part of our Saviour's sepulchre; of his clothes; of the manger in which he was laid; of the spear that wounded him; of the table where he supped; of the mount he ascended from; of Mount Sinai; of the burning bush; of the candle lighted by an angel on the eve of our Saviour's resurrection; of Mount Olive, where he prayed; of his cap and hair; of the Virgin's dress; of the body and garments of the Baptist; of St. Peter's beard and hair; St. Paul's neck bones; St. Andrew's stick; St. Bartholomew's head; St. Stephen's blood, and of the stone that killed him; of the coals that roasted St. Lawrence; the bones of a great many martyrs; the teeth of St. Maurice and St. Basil; the arms and ribs of other saints; the finger of Mary Magdalen; the cheek of St. Brigida; the veil of St. Agatha, &c. &c. &c. See the whole Saxon list in Dugdale, Monast. vol. i. p. 223 -225.

14 Elfric's words are: " The sign of the Holy Cross is our blessing; and to this cross we pray; yet not to the wood, but to the Almighty Lord, that was hanged for us upon it." MSS. Camb. Op. Wanl. p. 118.

BOOK others abundantly show. The character which Alcuin expected from an Anglo-Saxon archbishop of Canterbury, he has thus drawn at full length in a letter to one that was his contemporary: -

> "Be the comforter of the wretched, a father to the poor, and affable to all, that you may understand what you are to answer, and let your answers be always seasoned with wisdom; never rash, but honourable; not verbose, but moderate. Let your manners excel in courtesy, be praised for their humility, and be amiable for their piety. Teach not only by words, but by examples, all who live with you, or may visit you. Let your hand be liberal in alms, ready to requite, and frugal in receiving. Provide yourself with treasure in heaven. Make your wealth the redemption of your soul. It is more blessed to give than to receive. Have the Scriptures often in your hands. Be assiduous in prayer. Let virtue dignify your life, and impressive preaching your faith and hope." 15

Legal duties enjoined to their priests.

THE Canons of Edgar record the duties which were exacted from the Anglo-Saxon clergy.

"They were forbidden to carry any controversy among themselves to a lay tribunal. Their own companions were to settle it, or the bishop was to determine it.

"No priest was to forsake the church to which hewas consecrated, nor to intermeddle with the rights of others, nor to take the scholar of another. He was to learn sedulously his own handicraft, and not put another to shame for his ignorance, but to teach him better. The high-born were not to despise the less-born, nor any to be unrighteous or covetous dealers. He was to baptise whenever required, and to abolish all heathendom and witchcraft. They were to take care of their churches, and apply exclusively to their sacred duties, and not to indulge in idle speech, or idle deeds, or excessive

drinking; nor to let dogs come within their church inclosure, CHAP. nor more swine than a man might govern.

"They were to celebrate mass only in churches, and on the altar, unless in cases of extreme sickness. They were to have at mass their corporalis garment, and the subucula under their alba, and all their officiating garments were to be woven. Each was to have a good and right book. No one was to celebrate mass unless fasting, and unless he had one to make responses; nor more than three times a day, nor unless he had for the Eucharist pure bread, wine, and water. The cup was to be of something malten, not of wood. No woman was to come near the altar during mass. The bell was to be rung at the proper time.

" They were to preach every Sunday to the people, and always to give good examples. They were ordered to teach vouth with care, and to draw them to some craft. They were to distribute alms, and urge the people to give them, and to sing the psalms during the distribution, and to exhort the poor to intercede for the donors. They were forbidden to swear, and were to avoid ordeals. They were to recommend confession, penitence, and compensation, to administer the sacrament to the sick, and to anoint him if he desired it, and the priest was always to keep oil ready for this purpose and for baptism. He was neither to hunt, or hawk, or dice, but to play with his book as became his condition." 16

WE have another review of their duties trans- Effic's mitted to us in the exhortations of Elfric.

of their duties.

" Priests! you ought to be well provided with books and apparel as suits your condition. The mass priest should at least have his missal, his singing book, his reading book, his psalter, his hand book, his penitential, and his numeral one. He ought to have his officiating garments, and to sing from sun-rise, with the nine intervals and nine readings. sacramental cup should be of gold or silver, glass or tin, and not of earth, at least not of wood. The altar should be always clean, well clothed, and not defiled with dirt. There should be no mass without wine.

BOOK X. "Take care that you be better and wiser in your spiritual craft, than worldly men are in theirs, that you may be fit teachers of true wisdom. The priest should preach rightly the true belief; read fit discourses; visit the sick; and baptise infants, and give the unction when desired. No one should be a covetous trader, nor a plunderer, nor drunk often in wine-houses, nor be proud or boastful, nor wear ostentatious girdles, nor be adorned with gold, but to do honour to himself by his good morals.

"They should not be litigious nor quarrelsome, nor seditious, but should pacify the contending; nor carry arms, nor go to any fight, though some say that priests should carry weapons when necessity requires; yet the servant of God ought not to go to any war or military exercise. Neither a wife nor a battle becomes them, if they will rightly obey God and keep his laws as becomes their state." 17

An Anglo-Saxon sermon. THE Anglo-Saxon clergy sometimes made very earnest addresses to the people. Some specimens of one of these, about nine hundred years old, will show the tone and feeling they displayed.

"Dearest men! I intreat, and would humbly teach you that you should grieve now for your sins, because in the future life our tears will tell for nought. Hear the Lord now, who invites and will grant us forgiveness. Here he is very gentle with us; there he will be severe. Here his mild-heartedness is over us; there will be an eternal judgment. Here is transient joy; there will be perpetual sorrow.

"Study, my beloved, those things which are about to come to you. Humble yourselves here, that you be not abased hereafter. Ah! dearest men! who is so hard of heart, that he cannot weep at the punishments that may succeed, and dread their occurrence. What is better to us in this world than to be penitent for our transgressions, and to redeem them by alms-giving! This world and all within

it pass away, and then with our soul alone we must satisfy the Almighty God. The father cannot then help the son, nor the child the parent, but each will be judged according to his own deeds.

CHAP.

" Oh man! what are you doing! Be not like the dumb cattle. Oh think and remember how great a separation the Deity has placed between us and them. He sends to us an understanding soul, but they have none. Watch, then, O man! Pray and intreat while thou may. Remember that for thee the Lord descended from the high heaven to the most lowly state, that he might raise thee to that exalted life. Gold and silver cannot aid us from those grim and cruel torments, from those flames that will never be extinguished, and from those serpents that never die. There they are whetting their bloody teeth, to wound and tear our bodies without mercy, when the great trumpet shall sound, and the dreadful voice exclaim, 'Arise, and behold the mighty and the terrible King! You that have been stedfast and are chosen, arise! Lo, your heavenly Master comes. Now you shall see him whom you loved before you became dust. Come, and partake a glory which no eye has seen, and no ear has heard of. But, you wicked and impious, arise you, and fall abandoned into that deep infernal pit, where misery for ever must be your happiness and honour.'

"Oh! how miserable and joyless will those become who neglected the divine commandments, to hear this fearful sentence! Always should these things be before our eyes. Where are the kings that once triumphed, and all the mighty of the earth? Where are their treasures? Where is their splendid apparel? Oh, for how short a life are they now brought to an endless death! For what a transient glory have they earned a lasting sorrow! How paltry the profit for which they have bought these wretched torments! How momentary was the laughter that has been changed to these bitter and burning tears!" 18

THE teacher enforced these ideas by introducing a legendary tale, which displays some strength of imagination.

BOOK "A holy man had once a spiritual vision. He saw a soul on the point of being driven out of a body, but she dared not leave it, because she saw an execrable fiend standing before her. 'What are you doing,' cried the Devil. 'Why do you not come out? Do you hope that Michael the archangel will come with his company of angels, and carry you soon away?' Then another devil answered, and said, 'You need not fear that. I know his works, and, day and night; was always with him.'

> "The wretched soul, seeing this, began to shriek and cry, 'Wo! wo! wretched me, why was I ever created? Why did I ever enter this foul and polluted body?' She looked at her body, and exclaimed, 'Miserable corpse! it was thou that didst seize the wealth of the stranger, and wast ever heaping up treasure. It was thou that wouldest deck thyself with costly raiment. When thou wast all scarlet, I was all black; when thou wast merry, I was sad; when thou didst laugh, I wept. O wretched thou, what art thou now but a loathsome mass, the food of worms! Thou mayest rest a considerable time on the earth, but I shall go groaning and miserable to hell.

> "The Devil then exclaimed, 'Pierce his eye, because with his eve-sight he was active in all injustice. Pierce his mouth, because with that he eat and drank and talked, as he lusted. Pierce his heart, because neither pity, religion, por the love of God was ever in it.'

> "While the soul was suffering these things, a great splendour shone before her, and she asked what the brightness meant. The devil told her it came from the celestial regions. 'And you shall go through those dwellings most bright and fair, but must not stay there. You shall hear the angelic choirs, and see the radiance of all the holy; but there you cannot dwell.' Again the wretched soul exclaimed, 'Woe to me, that I ever saw the light of the human world!" 19

THE address thus concludes:

" My dearest men! Let us then remember that the life we now live is short, sinful, frail, falling, wretched, and de-

ceitful to all that love it. We live in trouble, and we die in CHAP. sorrow; and when it ends, they also who would not repent and give alms, must go to torment, and there suffer an immeasurable punishment for their misdeeds. There the afflicted soul will hang over hot flames, and be beaten, and bound, and thrown down into the blackest place, especially they who will show no mercy now. But let us turn ourselves to a better state, and earn an eternal kingdom with Christ and his saints, for ever and ever, world without end, Amen." 20

THE future world is thus painted in another Their of the Anglo-Saxon homilies.

Heaven.

"Let us reflect on the happiness we maylose. Let us resolve to earn that brightest of all places, and that most beautiful felicity with angels and high-angels, and with all the sainted ones in the rapture of heaven's kingdom. There it will last for ever. There is eternal life. There is the King of all tings, and the Ruler of all rulers, and the Creator of all creatures. There is peace without sorrow, light without darkness, and joy without an end. There will be the beginning of everlasting happiness; the beauty and delight of all that is holy; youth without age; the inexhaustible glory of the spirit in the highest splendour; peace and comfort; health unvarying; a most blissful throne; the most lovely fruits and the most exalted power." 21

THEY have left us several paraphrases and Paratranslations of the Pater noster 22, and the phrase of the Lord's

Creed.

20 Wilk. Leg. p. 176.

²² Of the Lord's Prayer, see the Saxon paraphrases from MSS. in Wanley, p. 48. 147. 267. Translations of it are in 16. p. 51. 81. 160. 197. 202. 221. There are several homilies upon it.

MSS. Cant. Wan. p. 117. A shorter description occurs in another. "There will be our eternal recompense between angels and high-angels for ever in heaven's kingdom. There love will never err, nor enmity disturb. There the sacred societies will always dwell in beauty and glory and pleasure. There will be mirth and majesty, and everlasting bliss with the Deity himself." MSS. Cant. Wan. p. 140.

BOOK Creed 23; some in poetry and some in prose, as if it had been a favourite exercise of their devotional leisure. There are others of the Doxology. 34

Their confessions.

WRITTEN specimens of the questions and answers at their scrift and andetnes, or confession, have also survived to us, some of which are interesting to read. 25

Proclamation for an Anglo-Saxon public fast.

WHEN one of the great Danish armies landed in England, the following penitentiary injunctions were issued: -

"We all need that we should diligently strive to obtain God's mercy and mild-heartedness, and that we, by his help, may withstand our enemies.

" Now it is our will that all folk should do general penance for three days, on bread, herbs, and water; that is, on (Monanbay, Tiperbay, Wobnerbay,) Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday before Michaelmas; and let every man come barefoot to church, without gold and ornaments, and go to confession (rhpart), and all go out with the holy relics, and call inwardly in their heart diligently on Christ; and let every man set apart a hide-penny, or a penny's-worth, and bring it to church, and afterwards divide it into three before the confessor and the town-gerefa, and, if he will not perform this, let him pay, according to law, a bunda, or villager, thirty pence; a threel, or slave, by his hide; a thegn, thirty shillings. For the three days let them be freed from work, and in every minster let all the company sing their Psalter the three days, and let every mass-priest say mass for our lord, and for all his people; and there, besides, let men say

³³ Of the Creed, see the poetical paraphrase in Wanley, p. 48. and various translations, p. 51. 202. 221., &c.

²⁴ Wan. MSS. p. 148. 48. 51.

^{25&#}x27; See various confessions at length from a MS. in Wanley, p. 50. 145.; and several others.

masses every day, in every minster one mass separately for CHAP. the necessities that surround us, till things become better: and at every tide-song let all the assembly, with bended knees, before God's altar, sing the third Psalm; and every year henceforth do this, till the Almighty pity us, and grant us to overcome our enemy. God Help us. Amen." 26

THE Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastics visited most Their crimes with appropriate penance, and especially tentiary homicides, both voluntary and involuntary, and systems. even the intention to commit them. What they called their deeplike, or severe penance, is thus described: -

" He must lay aside his weapons, and travel barefoot a long way; nor be sheltered of a night. He must fast and watch and pray both day and night, and willingly weary himself, and be so careless of his dress that the iron should not come to his hair or nails.

"He must not enter a warm bath, nor a soft bed; nor eat flesh, nor any thing by which he can be intoxicated; nor may he go inside of a church, but seek some holy place, and confess his guilt, and pray for intercession. He must kiss no man, but be always grieving for his sins." 12

It was an invention of deep policy, though of Liberty to suspicious piety, that they allowed the wealthy buy off penance. to purchase a removal of the penances imposed. This gave the church an interest that crimes should be committed, as well as that the penances should be too severe to be personally performed; yet this dangerous privilege was used for the best purposes. The following is one of their regulations on this subject: -

²⁶ MS. C. C. Cantab. ap. Wanley, p. 138.

²⁷ Leges Edgari, Wilk. p. 94.

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" Many men may redeem their penances by alms:

"He that hath ability may raise a church to the praise of God; and, if he has wherewithal, let him give land to it, and allow ten young men, so that they may serve in it, and minister the daily service. He may repair churches where he can, and make folk-ways, with bridges over deep waters, and over miry places; and let him assist poor men's widows, and step-children, and foreigners. He may free his own slaves, and redeem the liberty of those of other masters, and especially the poor captives of war; and let him feed the needy, and house them, cloath and warm them, and give them bathing and beds." 28

It is impossible to praise too highly the benevolence of these substitutions.

The permission to buy off penance by money could not but become a source of the greatest abuses; nor was it less objectionable to commute them, if at all useful, for certain quantities of repetitions, by rote, of some devotional forms; which, thus reiterated, could have little more meaning or efficacy than the same amount of unintelligible nonsense, or of a parrot's exclamations.

THE law thus provided for it:-

"A man may redeem one day's fasting by a penny, or by repeating two hundred Psalms. He may redeem a twelve-month's fasting by thirty shillings, or may set a man free who is of that worth. And for one day's fast he may sing six times the Beati Immaculati, and six Pater-nosters; or for a day's fast he may kneel and bend sixty times to the earth, with a Pater-noster; or he may bend all his limbs to God, and fifteen times sing 'Miserere mei Dominus,' and fifteen Pater-nosters." ¹⁹

²⁸ Leges Edgari Wilk. p. 95.

²⁹ Leg. Edg. p. 96.

THAT the Anglo-Saxons continued the error CHAP. of the ancient world in referring the phenomena of nature almost always to supernatural agency, Their saints. though with the substitution of saints, angels, and demons for the gods and goddesses, heroes, genii, and daimons of antiquity, is a true assertion as to the nation at large, and as to their religious instructors, with few exceptions. Their ignorance of natural science led them to this mistake, as its abundance with us has urged outphilosophy into the opposite extreme. Our ancestors were inclined to ascribe nothing to natural causes; and we tend to attribute to them every phenomena. They saw nothing but the Divinity acting around them; and some of us exclude him wholly from his creation. Both extremes are erroneous. The probability is, that the Supreme does every thing by the natural causes which He has organised to act for the general good, so far as their agency will from time to time produce it; but where their operation becomes at any time insufficient to achieve his purposes, they are assisted by his immediate interference, or by the introduction of new effective agents that are more suited to the new circumstances that arise, and the new improvements that he intends to establish. He, as our Great Alfred suggested, binds himself in no chains as to the future guidance of nature, but keeps Himself free, at all times, to do whatever His wisdom finds to be successively most

BOOK expedient for the benefit of his whole creation, and therefore for every part of it; for the whole cannot be benefited unless every portion of it partake of the advantage.

But the Anglo-Saxons pursued the custom of the day in venerating those who, after death, were invested by the ecclesiastical authorities with the dignity of saints. They had several of these of native origin, who were held in great estimation, and whose lives were written with zealous enthusiasm. ³⁰ They ascribed to their saints great powers over nature and disease, and human life, as the classical nations had done to their fabulous divinities, and thus impeded their own progress in natural philosophy by substituting imaginary agents for natural causes. Our ancestors also respected hermits, who lived in woods or cells retired from the world. ³¹

3° As St. Guthlac, St. Edwin, St. Oswald, St. Boniface, St. Swithin, St. Neot, St. Edmund, St. Chad, St. Winifreda, St. Dunstan, St. Ethelwald, St. Edward, and many others.

31 That the lives of the Saxon hermits, or anchorites, were not unusefully employed we have a very splendid proof in the Saxon MS. of the Gospels in the British Museum, Nero, D.4. Wanley justly calls this "an incomparable specimen of Anglo-Saxon calligraphy," p. 253. It is beautifully illuminated and decorated. Billfrith, the anchorite, was the person who so adorned it. He is mentioned by his Saxon coadjutor, Aldred, to have ornamented it with gold and gems, and with silver gilt over. Turgot, the Anglo-Saxon, also declares him to have been "in aurificii arte precipuus." Wanl. ib. It seems to have been written about the time of Alfred.

THE evil personage called Anti-christ, who, it CHAP. is supposed, will accompany the last ages of the world, was a frequent subject of contemplation Their views of among the Anglo-Saxons. They thought that Antihe was about to come in the tenth and eleventh centuries. 32 One of their discourses upon him begins with "Beloved men! there is great need that we should be aware of the fearful time that is now approaching. Now, very soon will be the times of Anti-christ; therefore we ought to expect him, and carefully think upon him." A long detail then follows on this subject 33, but the most curious account of him is that of Albinus, which he addresses to Charlemagne. 34

³² Elfric thought, from the calamities of Ethelred's reign, that the end of the world was near: "By this we may understand that this world is passing away, and very nigh its end." MSS. Vesp. D. 14.

³³ The Sermon is printed, with a Latin translation, in the Appendix to the Saxon Dictionary.

³⁴ A few particulars of Alcuin's fancy may amuse: " He is to be born of a most flagitious robber and harlot, with the aid of the Devil, at Babylon. He will pervade Palestine: convert kings, princes, and people, and send his missionaries all over the world. He will work many miracles; bring fire from heaven; make trees vegetate in a moment; calm and agitate the sea at his will; transform various objects; change the course of rivers; command the winds; and apparently raise the dead. He will bitterly persecute Christianity. He will discover hidden treasures, and lavish them among his followers; a dreadful period of tribulation will follow. He will not come till the Roman empire has entirely ceased, and that cannot be while the kings of the French continue. One of the French kings is, at last, to obtain the whole Roman

BOOK empire, and will be the greatest and the last of all kings.

K. He is to go to Jerusalem, and lay down his crown and sceptre on Mount Olivet. Then Anti-christ is to appear, and Gog and Magog to emerge. Against them this French king of the Romans is to march; to conquer all nations, destroy all idols, and restore Christianity. The Jews are to be restored,"

&c. &c. Alc. Op. 1211-1215.

CHAP.

CHAP, IV.

The Anglo-Saxon Te Deum; Jubilate; Magnificat; and Specimens of their Prayers.

Tp€, Los, pe hepiach, the, Dpihten, pe ansettah.

The, æcne ræben, eal eonth epunthath.

The, ealle englar, the, heorenar and ealle annealbum.

The, chepubim and repaphim unablinnendlice regne Te Deum.

Dalig! Dalig! Dalig! Spiliten, Los penesa!

Fulle rýnz heorenar and eonzhe mæzenzhnýmmer pulbper zhiner.

The, pulbonrul ennonacena peneo,

The, picizena henzenolic zecel,

The, cythpa reynes henath hene,

The, embhpyppe eonthena haliz anter zeromnunz,

Fæben, opmærer mægen-chpymmer!

Appunchne chinne rochne and anliene runu;

Daligne picoblice spespizenope Lart.

Thu, cýnz puloper cýninzer Chpirce,

Thu, pæbener ece thu eant runu.

Tha to aligenne thu angenge mann, thu ne arcunebort ræmnan innath.

Thu openprichebum beather angan; Thu onlyfbert zelyrebum picu heorena.

Thu on the spithpan healte Gober sette on pulbne pæbener. Dema thu eant zelvreb peran topeans,

The connortlice pe halfrach thinum theorem zehelp, that or beongynthum blobe thu alyroeft.

Ece so mis halzum zhinum pulsop beon ropzýren.

Pal so sole thin; and bleera ynsepeansnyrre thine.

And genece hy and upahor hy oth on ecnecnyme.

Thuph rýnopize bazar pe blezriach the

And pe hepiath naman thinne on populoe and a populo.

воок х.

L'emebema bæze thirum buton rynne ur zehealban. L'emiltra une, L'emiltra.

Sy milbheopenyr thin open ur rpa rpa pe hyheath on the.
On the ic hihte; ic ne beo zercyno on ecnyrre.

The Jubi-

Drýmath spilitne ealle conthan; theopiath spilitne on blirre; Ingath on zerilthe hir on blithnerre.

Witath roptham the spiliten he if Los; he pophte up, and na pe ryle up; role his and sceap roptopnother his.

Ingath gatu hir on anobetnerre, careptunar hir on ymenum anobettath

Depuarh namam hir; roptham the pynrum ir Spihten, on ecnerre milbheoptner hir, and oth on cynpene and cynpene rothræftnerr hir.

The Magnificat. Min rapel menrach Dnihten j min zart zeblirrube on Lobe minum Pælenbe.

Fortham the he zereali hir thinene eas-mosnerre, rothlice heonun-routh me easize reezath ealle cheoperra.

Fortham the me mycele thing bybe re the militing if i hir nama if halig.

J hir milb-heaptner of encoperfe on encoperfe hine onbpæbenbum.

pe pophte mæzne on hir eapme. De to-bælbe tha orenmoban on mobe hypa heoptan.

De apeapp tha pican of retle and tha ead-modan upahor.
Dingpigende he mid godum gerylde i ofen-mode idele

roplet.

pe arenz Irpahel hir cuita j zemunte hir milt heopenerre. Spa he rppæc to upum rætepum Abpahame ant hir ræte on a peopult.3

The following addresses to the Deity are selected from the Anglo-Saxon remains to com-

MS. Cott. Lib. Vespasian, A. 1.

³ MS. Cott. Vitell. E. 18. Another version from Vespas. A.1. may be seen in Wanley's excellent Catalogue of the Saxon MSS. p. 222.

3 Saxon Gosp. Luc. c. 1.

plete the picture of their minds; and to show CHAP. that, notwithstanding the illiterate age in which they lived, and the superstitions which prevailed, yet that the language of their devotion was not discreditable to their general intellect. These instances will indicate that they studied to connect it both with their feelings and their reason. They are in a poetical form:—

Oh Lord beloved!
Oh God our judge!
hear me:
Everlasting Ruler!
I know that my soul
with sins is wounded.
Heal thou it,
O Lord of heaven!
And restore thou it,
O Governor of life!
For thou most easily may,
Physician of us all!
of all that exist
far or wide.

0

O Sovereign of radiance! Creator of man! benign be thy mind to me for good. Give me thy pardon, and thy pity.

May he be merciful, that on earth here we may resist the devil, and work his will! Woe to him for his jollity when he the retribution shall have and see, unless he from the evil has previously ceased.

But happy will he be who here on earth, day and night, obeys the Lord, and always works his will. Well to him will be this work when he the retribution shall have and see, if he continues it to a good end:

3.

Oh Light of light!
Oh joy of life!
grant it to me,
Blessed King of Glory!
what I for my soul
pray of the heavens
for the eternal honour.

Thou art the benign God; thou hast and rulest One over all. Earth and heaven, of their various creatures, Thou art the true Creator; One over all those living on the earth Anglo-Saxon Prayers.

BOOK as in heaven above: thou art the Saviour God.

> Nor may any man profit thee that are collected together over the wide ground: men on the earth. over all the world. Nor can we ever say, nor indeed know, how noble thou art Eternal Lord!

Nor though the host of angels up in heaven, in their assembled wisdom. should begin to say it, might they ever narrate, nor the number know, how great thou art, Mighty Lord! But vast is still the wonder. Governor of Angels, if thou thyself should excite them.

Chief of Victory how glorious thou art, mighty and strong in power! King of all kings! the living Christ! Creator of all the worlds! Ruler of angels, Noblest of all nobility, Saviour Lord!

Thou art the Prince that on former days, the joy of all women, fair wast born at Bethlehem that city, a comfort to mankind!

An honour to all the children of men. To them that believe on the living God, and on that eternal light up in the skies.

Thy power is so great, Mighty Lord! so that none truly know it, nor the exaltation of the state of the angels of the King of heaven.

I confess thee, Almighty God! I believe on thee. beloved Saviour! that thou art the great one, and the strong in power, and the condescending of all gods, and the Eternal King of all creatures: and I am one of little worth, and a depraved man, who is sinning here very nearly day and night. I do as I would not: sometimes in actions, sometimes in words, sometimes in thought, very guilty in conscious wickedness oft and repeatedly.

But I beseech thee now, Lord of heaven! And pray to thee, best of human-born, that thou pity me,

Mighty Lord!
High King of Heaven!
and the Holy Spirit;
and aid me
Father Almighty!
that I thy will
may perform,
before from this frail life
I depart.
Refuse me not,

Lord of Glory!
But grant me,
blessed, illustrious King!
permit me, with angels,
up to ascend
to sit in the sky;
and praise the God of heaven
with the tongue of the holy
world without end. 4 Amen.

CHAP.

Of the Latin prayers at the end of every psalm in the Saxon and Latin Psalter, the following may be selected as specimens of the Anglo-Saxon private devotions in prose:—

"O Lord! our King, and our God! propitious, hearken unto the voice of thy petitioners. Deign to hear them devoutly approaching thee in the morning hour, that through the greatness of thy mercy, and cleansed from all the stain of sins, we may enter thy house, and every where sing thy praises in thy fear. 5"

"What is man, O Lord! that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man, unless thou shouldest redeem him, that he may not perish for ever. Impart therefore to us the help we need; Thou who hast given thy precious blood for us! Oh, grant that those whom thy death has redeemed may glorify thee in their lives." 6

"Regard and hear us, O Lord, our God! and illuminate by the contemplation of thy presence the eyes of our mind, that we sleep not in death; assist these our endeavours to please thee, which thou thyself has afforded to us. Give us the full accomplishment of that good work, who hast given us its first principle, the will to do it. Grant that we may be able to complete it, Oh, thou who hast imparted the wish to begin it."?

⁴ See the original Saxon in Cedmon, App.

⁵ Spelman's Anglo-Saxon Psalter, addit. to psalm v.

⁶ Ibid. ad. ps. viii. 7 Ibid. ad. ps. xii.

BOOK X.

"Make known to us, O Lord! the ways of life, and fill a with the delights of thy right hand. Place thy yoke upon u which is so sweet under thy direction, and grant to each of us that he may bless thee with the affection of his heart, and glorify thee by his intellect, through," &c.8

"Oh Lord! our strength, and the horn of our salvation! impart to us the fervor of thy love, that our minds may love thee with unwearied affection; and by the effect of this attachment to thee may be turned towards our neighbour with

benignity, through," &c.9

"Govern us, O Lord! and then we shall want nothing; for what is there to be desired under thy government but thyself alone? What is there to be sought for while thou sparest us, but thy glory? Lead us then through the path of justice, and convert our souls from every evil action to virtue. May we, under thy protection, neither fear the adversities that may assail us, nor dread the approach of the shadow of death or its evils." 10

"Lord! strong and mighty! Lord of the virtues! King of Glory! cleanse our heart from every sin; keep our hands guiltless; and separate our souls from all vanity, that we may be fit to receive in thy holy place blessings from thee, O Lord, our God." xx

"O Lord, our King! who continueth for ever; to whom all the earth is deservedly resounding with the voices of praise, and singing thy glory and honour; grant, we beseech thee, strength to thy people, against the evils of the present day, that we may enjoy prosperity here, and trust in thine eternal promises hereafter, through," &c. 12

"O Lord, our Redeemer! O God of truth! who hast redeemed mankind, sold to sin, not by silver or gold, but by the blood of thy precious Son, be our protector, and look down upon our lowliness; and because great is the multitude of thy kindnesses, oh, raise our desires always to partake them, and excite our minds to explore them, through," &c. 13

⁸ Spelman's Anglo-Saxon Psalter, addit. psalm xv.

⁹ Ibid. ps. xvii.

¹⁰ Ibid. ps. xxxii.

¹⁸ Ibid. ps. xxiii.

¹³ Ibid. ps. xxviii.

¹³ Ibid. ps. xxx.

"O Lord! who hast become our refuge before the moun- CHAP. tains were made, or the dry land was formed: Author of time, yet without any limit of time thyself! In thy nature there is no past. To thee the future is never new. There everlasting virtue is always present. There immutable truth endures for ever. 14

"For thy name's sake, O Lord! extend to us thy mercy. What is sweeter than that by which thou hast freed us from death, and made us thine associates in immortality! By which thou suppliest our helplessness, and grantest to us to continue in the fulness of holiness. May it now render us acceptable to thee, as it has already reconciled thee to us when alienated from thee."15

"O Lord! who dwellest in the loftiest space; whose ineffable Godhead is confined to no created circuit, nor can be described by any mortal breath; look down, we implore thee, on thy humble servants, both in heaven and on earth. May no pride creep into our thoughts or actions which can avert from us the eyes of thy mercy! May that sincere humility and submission be within us, which may make us worthy of thy regard, and raise us to the reward of thy future glorification." 16

"O God of heaven and earth! whose all-seeing providence is everlasting. O God, by whose death even Tartarus was illuminated; by whose resurrection the multitude of thy holy ones was gladdened; at whose ascension the host of angels exulted; we implore the excelling virtue of thy glory, that, directed by thee into the way of eternal life, we may be defended by that arm, under whose protection those who are honoured by thy favour magnify thee in heaven." 17

"Purify, O Lord, our God! our heart and reins by the fire of the Holy Spirit, that we may serve thee in chastity of heart and body. Free us from all vice, and have mercy upon us, whom thou hast redeemed by thine inestimable intercourse," 18

¹⁴ Spelman's Anglo-Saxon Psalter, addit. ps. lxxxix.

¹⁵ Ibid. ps. cviii.

¹⁶ Ibid. ps. cxii.

¹⁷ Ibid. ps. cxxxviii.

¹⁸ Ibid. ps. xxv.

BOOK X.

The prayer to the 49th Psalm concludes thus:—

"Despise not our contrite and humble heart; and by the ineffable power of the Trinity, may there be the testimony of the One Divinity that, strengthened by the Father, renewed by the Son, and guarded by the Holy Spirit, we may rejoice in thee. 19

¹⁹ Spelman's Anglo-Saxon Psalter, addit. psalm xlix.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

THE HISTORY OF THE LAWS OF THE ANGLO-SAXONS.

CHAP. I.

Homicide

TO trace the principles on which the laws of various CHAP. nations have been formed, has been at all times an interesting object of intellectual exertion; and as the legislation of the more polished periods of states is much governed by its ancient institutions, it will be important to consider the principles on which our Anglo-Saxon forefathers framed their laws to punish public wrongs, and to redress civil injuries.

WE shall select for this purpose homicide, personal injuries, theft, and adultery.

THE principle of pecuniary punishment distinguishes the laws of the Anglo-Saxons, and of all the German nations. Whether it arose from the idea, that the punishment of crime should be attended with satisfaction to the state, or with some benefit to the individual injured, or his family, or his lord; or whether, in their fierce' dispositions and warring habits, death was less dreaded as an evil than poverty; or whether the great were the authors of most of the crimes committed, and

CHAP. it was easier to make them responsible in their property than in their lives, we cannot at this distant æra decide.

The Saxons made many distinctions in homicides. But all ranks of men were not of equal value in the eye of the Saxon law, nor their lives equally worth protecting. The Saxons had therefore established many nice distinctions in this respect. Our present legislation considers the life of one man as sacred as that of another, and will not admit the degree of the crime of murder to depend on the rank or property of the deceased. Hence a peasant is now as secured from wilful homicide as a nobleman. It was otherwise among the Saxons.

THE protection which every man received was a curious exhibition of legislative arithmetic. Every man was valued at a certain sum, which was called his were: and whoever took his life, was punished by having to pay this were.

The were was the compensation allotted to the family or relations of the deceased for the loss of his life. But the Saxons had so far advanced in legislation, as to consider homicide as a public as well as private wrong. Hence, besides the redress appointed to the family of the deceased, another pecuniary fine was imposed on the murderer, which was called the wite. This was the satisfaction to be rendered to the community for the public wrong which had been committed. It was paid to the magistrate presiding over it, and varied according to the dignity of the person in whose jurisdiction the offence was committed; twelve shillings was the payment to an eorl, if the homicide occurred in his town, and fifty were forfeited to the king if the district were under the regal jurisdiction."

Wilkins, Leg. Saxon. p. 2, 3.

In the first Saxon laws which were committed to CHAP. writing, or which have descended to us, and which were established in the beginning of the 7th century, murder appears to have been only punishable by the were and the wite, provided the homicide was not in the servile state. If an esne, a slave, killed a man, even "unsinningly," it was not, as with us, esteemed an excusable homicide; it was punished by the forfeiture of all that he was worth. A person so punished presents us with the original idea of a felon; we consider this word to be a feo-lun, or one divested of all property.

In the laws of Ethelbert the were seems to have been uniform. These laws state a meduman leod-gelde, a general penalty for murder, which appears to have been 100 shillings.3 The differences of the crime arising from the quality of the deceased, or the dignity of the magistrate within whose jurisdiction it occurred, or the circumstances of the action, were marked by differences of the wite rather than of the were. The wite in a king's town was fifty shillings; in an earl's twelve. If the deceased was a freeman, the wite was fifty shillings to the king as the drichtin, the lord or sovereign of the land. So, if the act was done at an open grave, twenty shillings was the wite; if the deceased was a ceorl, six shillings was the wite. If a læc killed the noblest guest, eighty shillings was the wite; if the next in rank, sixty; if the third, forty shillings.4

The wite and the lead-gelde were to be paid by the murderer from his own property, and with good money. But if he fled from justice, his relations were made responsible for it.⁵

THE Saxon law-makers so far extended their care as

² Wilkins, p. 7.

³ Ibid. p. 2.

⁴ Ibid. p.1—7.

⁵ Ibid. p. 3.

C H A P. to punish those who contributed to homicide by introducing weapons among those who were quarrelling.

Twenty shillings composed the wite.6

THE usual time for the payment of the wite and were is not stated; but forty days is mentioned in one case as the appointed period.7

As the order and civilisation of the Anglo-Saxon society increased, a greater value was given to human life, and the penalties of its deprivation were augmented.

THE first increase of severity noticed was against the esne, the servile. Their state of subjection rendered them easy instruments of their master's revenge; and it was therefore found proper to make some part of their punishment extend to their owner. Hence, if any man's esne killed a man of the dignity of an eorl, the owner was to deliver up the esne, and make a pecuniary payment adequate to the value of three men. If the murderer escaped, the price of another man was exacted from the lord, and he was required to show, by sufficient oaths, that he could not catch him. Three hundred shillings were also imposed as the compensation. If the esne killed a freeman, one hundred shillings were the penalty, the price of one man, and the delivery of the homicide; or if he fled, the value of two men, and purgatory oaths.8

A succeeding king exempted the killer of a thief from the payment of his were.⁹ This, however, was a mitigation that was capable of great abuse, and therefore Ina required oath that the thief was killed "sinning," or in the act of stealing, or in the act of flying on account of the theft.¹⁰

HUMANITY dictated further discrimination. A vagrant

⁶ Wilkins, p. 3.

⁷ Ibid. ⁸ Ibid. 7, 8.

⁹ Ibid. 12.

²⁰ Ibid. 17. 20.

in the woods, out of the highway, who did not cry out or CHAP. sound his horn (probably to give public notice of his situation), might be deemed a thief, and slain 11; and the homicide, by affirming that he slew him for a thief, escaped all penalties. It was, however, wisely added, that if the fact were concealed, and not made known till long time after, the relations of the slave should be permitted to show that he was guiltless.12 Mistake or malice was further guarded against by requiring that where a homicide had killed the thief in the act of flying, yet if he concealed the circumstance he should pay the penalties.13 The concealing was construed to be presumptive proof of an unjustifiable homicide. Modern law acts on a similar presumption, when it admits the hiding of the body to be an indication of felonious discretion in an infant-murderer, between the age of seven and four-

In the days of Ina, the were, or protecting valuation of an individual's life, was not uniform. The public were arranged into classes, and each class had an appropriated were.

RANK and property seem to have been the criterion of the estimation. The were of some in Ina's time was thirty shillings: of others, 120; of others, 200.¹⁴ The same principle of protection, and of discriminating its pecuniary valuation, was applied to foreigners. The were of a Welshman, who was proprietor of a hide of land, was 120 shillings; if he had but half that quantity, it was 80; and if he had none, it was 60.¹⁵ Hence it appears, that the wealthier a man was, the more precious his life was deemed. This method of regulating the enormity of the crime by the property of the de-

¹³ Wilkins, p. 12.

²³ Ibid. 18.

²³ Ibid. 20.

²⁴ Ibid. 25.

¹⁵ Ibid. 20.

CHAP. ceased, was highly barbarous. It diminished the safety of the poor, and gave that superior protection to wealth which all ought equally to have shared.

> THE were, or compensatory payment, seems to have been made to the relations of the defunct. As the exaction of the wite, or fine to the magistrate, kept the crime from appearing merely as a civil injury, this application of the were was highly equitable. But if the deceased was in a servile state, the compensation seems to have become the property of the lord. On the murder of a foreigner, two-thirds of the were went to the king, and one-third only to his son or relations: or, if no relations, the king had one half, and the gild-scipe, or fraternity to which he was associated, received the other. 16

> THE curious and singular social phenomenon of the gild-scipes, we have already alluded to. The members of these gilds were made to a certain degree responsible for one another's good conduct. They were, in fact, so many bail for each other. Thus, in Alfred's laws, if a man who had no paternal relations killed another, one-third of the were of the slain was to be paid by the maternal kinsman, and one-third by the gild; and if there were no maternal kinsmen, the gild paid a moiety. On the other hand, the gild had also the benefit of receiving one-half the were, if such a man of their society were killed. 17

> THE principle of making a man's society amenable for his legal conduct was carried so far, that by Ina's law, every one who was in the company where a man was killed, was required to justify himself from the act, and all the company were required to pay a fourth part of the were of the deceased. 18

¹⁶ Wilkins, p. 18. 17 Ibid. p. 41. 18 Ibid. p. 20.

THE same principle was established by Alfred in illegal associations. If any man with a predatory band
should slay a man of the valuation of twelve hundred
shillings, the homicide was ordered to pay both his were
and the wite, and every one of the band was fined thirty
shillings for being in such an association. If the guilty
individual were not avowed, the whole band were ordered to be accused, and to pay equally the were and
the wite. 19

The Anglo-Saxons followed the dictates of reason in punishing in homicide those whom we now call accessories before the fact. Thus, if any one lent his weapons to another to kill with them, both were made responsible for the were. If they did not choose to pay it in conjunction, the accessory was charged with one-third of the were and the wite. A pecuniary fine was imposed on the master of a mischievous dog. A

EXCUSABLE homicide was not allowed to be done with impunity. If a man so carried a spear as that it should destroy any individual, he was made amenable for the were, but excused from the wite. **

Thus stood the laws concerning murder, up to the days of Alfred. The compact between his son Edward and Guthrun made a careful provision for the punctual payment of the were. The homicide was required to produce for this purpose the security of eight paternal and four maternal relations.²³

In the reign of Edmund, an important improvement took place. The legal severity against murder was increased on the head of the offending individual; but his kindred were guarded from the revenge of the family of the deceased. If the full were was not discharged within

¹⁹ Wilkins, p. 40.

²⁷ Ibid. 40. 22 Ibid. 42.

²⁰ Ibid. p. 39

²³ Ibid. p. 54.

CHAP. twelve months, the relations of the criminal were exempted from hostility, but on the condition that they afforded him neither food nor protection. If any supported him, he became what would now be termed an accessory after the fact; he forfeited to the king all his property, and was also exposed to the enmity of the relations of the deceased. The king also forbad any wite on homicide to be remitted.24 And whoever revenged an homicide on any other than the criminal, was declared the enemy of the king and his own friend, and forfeited his possessions. The reason alleged by the sovereign for these and his other provisions was, that he was weary of the unjust and manifold fights which occurred. 25 The object was to extinguish that species of revenge which became afterwards known under the name of deadly feud. This was the fæhthe, the enmity which the relations of the deceased waged against the kindred of the murderer.

> Though the wite was all the penalty that society exacted to itself for murder, and the were all the pecuniary compensation that was permitted to the family, yet we must not suppose that murder was left without any other punishment. There seems reason to believe, that what has been called the deadly feud existed amongst them. The relations of the deceased avenged themselves, if they could, on the murderer or his kinsmen. The law did not allow it. The system of wites and weres tended to discountenance it, by requiring pecuniary sacrifices on all homicides, and of course on those of retaliation as well as others. But as all that the law exacted was the fine and the compensation, individuals were left at liberty to glut their revenge, if they chose to pay for it.

But this spirit of personal revenge was early restricted.

³⁴ Wilkins, 79, 74.

Ina's laws imposed a penalty of thirty shillings, besides CHAP. compensation, if any one took his own revenge before he had demanded legal redress. 26 So Alfred's laws enjoined, that if any one knew that his enemy was sitting at home, yet that he should not fight with him until he had demanded redress; but he might shut his adversary up, and besiege him for seven days if he could. If at the expiration of this time the person would surrender himself, he was to have safety for thirty days, and to be given up to his friends and relations. The ealdorman was to help those who had not power enough to form this siege. If the ealdorman refused it, he was to ask aid of the king before he fought. So if any one fell accidentally in with his enemy, yet if the latter was willing to surrender himself, he was to have peace for thirty days. But if he refused to deliver up his arms, he might be fought with immediately.27

Ir any one took up a thief, he not only had a reward, but the relations of the criminal were to swear, that they would not take the fæhthe, or deadly feud, for his apprehension.²⁸ So if any one killed a thief in the act of flying, the relations of the dead man were to swear the unceastes oath; that is, the oath of no enmity, or of not taking the fæhthe.²⁹

EVERY man was ordered to oppose the warfæhthe, if he was able, or could dare to attempt it. 30

EDMUND the First interfered to check this system of personal revenge, with marked severity, as before men-

²⁶ Wilkins, p. 16. ²⁷ Ibid. p. 43, 44. ²⁸ Ibid. p. 19.

²⁹ Wilkins and Lye call this the unceases oath, which they interpret unmeaningly the oath not select. The reading of the Roff. M S. is unceastes, which is intelligible, and is obviously an expression synonimous with the unfæhtha oath mentioned in the preceding page. Both passages clearly mean, that the taker and killer of the thief were to be absolved from the fæhthe of his relations.

³⁰ Ibid. 22.

CHAP. tioned. He declared that the delinquent should bear his crime on his own head; and that if his kinsmen did not save him by paying the compensation, they should be protected from all fæhthe, provided that they afforded him neither mete nor mund, neither food nor shelter.31

³² Wilkins, 73.

CHAP. II.

Personal Injuries.

THE compensation allotted to PERSONAL INJURIES, CHAP. arising from what modern lawyers would call assault and battery, was curiously arranged. Homer is celebrated for discriminating the wounds of his heroes with anatomical precision. The Saxon legislators were not less anxious to distinguish between the different wounds to which the body is liable, and which, from their laws, we may infer that they frequently suffered. In their most ancient laws these were the punishments: -

THE loss of an eye or of a leg appears to have been considered as the most aggravated injury which could arise from an assault; and was therefore punished by the highest fine, or 50 shillings.

To be made lame was the next most considerable offence, and the compensation for it was 30 shillings.

For a wound that caused deafness, 25 shillings.

To lame the shoulder, divide the chine-bone, cut off the thumb, pierce the diaphragm, or to tear off the hair and fracture the skull, was each punished by a fine of 20 shillings.

For breaking the thigh, cutting off the ears, wounding the eye or mouth, wounding the diaphragm, or injuring the teeth so as to affect the speech, was exacted 12 shillings.

For cutting off the little finger, 11 shillings.

For cutting off the great toe, or for tearing off the hair entirely, 10 shillings.

CHAP.

For piercing the nose, 9 shillings.

For cutting off the fore-finger, 8 shillings.

For cutting off the gold finger, for every wound in the thigh, for wounding the ear, for piercing both cheeks, for cutting either nostril, for each of the front teeth, for breaking the jaw-bone, for breaking an arm, 6 shillings.

FOR seizing the hair so as to hurt the bone, for the loss of either of the eye-teeth, or of the middle finger, 4 shillings.

For pulling the hair so that the bone became visible; for piercing the ear, or one cheek; for cutting off the thumb-nail, for the first double tooth, for wounding the nose with the fist, for wounding the elbow, for breaking a rib, or for wounding the vertebræ, 3 shillings.

For every nail (probably of the fingers), and for every tooth beyond the first double tooth, 1 shilling.

For seizing the hair, 50 scættas.

For the nail of the great toe, 30 scættas.

For every other nail, 10 scættas.

To judge of this scale of compensations by modern experience, there seems to be a gross disproportion, not only between the injury and the compensation, in many instances, but also between the different classes of compensation. Six shillings is a very inconsiderable recompense for the pain and confinement that follows an arm or the jaw-bone broke; and it seems absurd to rank in punishment with these serious injuries the loss of a front tooth. To value the thumb at a higher price than the fingers, is reasonable; but to estimate the little finger at 11 shillings, the great toe at 10 shillings, the fore finger at 8 shillings, the ring-finger at 6 shillings, and the middle finger at 4 shillings, seems a very capricious distribution of recompense. So the teeth seem to have been valued on no principle intelligible to us: a front tooth was atoned for by 6 shillings, an eye-tooth by 4 shillings, the first double tooth 3 shillings, either of the

others 1 shilling. Why to lame the shoulder should CHAP. occasion a fine of 20 shillings, and to break the thigh but 12, and the arm but 6, cannot be explained, unless we presume that the surgical skill of the day found the cure of the arm easier than of the thigh, and that easier than the shoulder. 1

ALFRED made some difference in these compensations, which may be seen in his laws. 3

He also appointed penalties for other personal wrongs. Ir any one bound a ceorl unsinning, he was to pay ten shillings, twenty if he whipped him, and thirty if he brought him to the pillory. If he shaved him in such a manner as to expose him to derision, he forfeited ten shillings, and thirty shillings if he shaved him like a priest, without binding him; but if he bound him and then gave him the clerical tonsure, the penalty was doubled. Twenty shillings was also the fine if any man cut another's beard off. 3 These laws prove the value that was attached to the hair and the beard in the Anglo-Saxon society.

ALFRED also enjoined, that if any man carrying a spear on his shoulder pierced another, or wounded his eyes, he paid his were, but not a wite. If it was done wilfully, the wite was exacted, if he had carried the point three fingers higher than the shaft. If the weapon was carried horizontally, he was excused the wite.

Wilkins, p. 4-6. In the compensation for the teeth. the injury to the personal appearance seems to have occasioned the severest punishment. The fine was heaviest for the loss of the front tooth.

³ Ibid. p. 44-46.

³ Ibid. p. 42.

⁴ Ibid.

CHAP. III.

Theft and Robbery.

CHAP.

THEFT appears to have been considered as the most enormous crime, and was, as such, severely punished. If we consider felony to be a forfeiture of goods and chattels, theft was made felony by the Anglo-Saxons in their earliest law; for if a freeman stole from a freeman, the compensation was to be threefold; the king had the wite and all his goods.

THE punishment was made heavier in proportion to the social rank of the offender. Thus, while a freeman's theft was to be atoned for by a triple compensation, the servile were only subjected to a two-fold retribution.²

THE punishment of theft was soon extended farther. By the laws of Wihtræd, if a freeman was taken with the theft in his hand, the king had the option of killing him, of selling him, or receiving his were.³

INA aggravated the punishment yet more. If the wife and family of a thief witnessed his offence, they were all made to go into slavery.⁴ The thief himself was to lose his life, unless he could redeem it by paying his were.⁵ Ina's law defines these kinds of offenders. They were called thieves, if no more than seven were in a body; but a collection of above seven, up to thirty-five, was a hloth; a greater number was considered as an here, or an army ⁶: distinct punishments were allotted to these sorts of offenders.

THE Saxon legislators were never weary of accumu-

^{*} Wilk. p. 2.

² Ibid. p. 7.

³ Ibid. p. 12.

⁴ Ibid. p. 16.

⁵ Ibid. p. 17.

⁶ Ibid. p. 17.

lating severities against thieves; the amputation of the CHAP. hand and foot was soon added. If a man's geneat stole, the master himself was subjected to a certain degree of compensation. A reward of ten shillings was allowed for his apprehension; and if a thief taken was suffered to escape, the punishment for the neglect was severe. **

In the reign of Ethelstan, a milder spirit introduced a principle, which has continued to prevail in our criminal jurisprudence ever since, and still exists in it. This was, that no one should lose his life for stealing less than twelve pence. The Saxon legislators added, indeed, a proviso, which we have dropped: "unless he flies or defends himself." 12

They introduced another mitigating principle, which we still attend to in practice, though not in theory; this was, that no youth under fifteen should be executed. The same exception of his flight or resistance was here also added **; his punishment was to be imprisonment, and bail was to be given for his good behaviour. If his relations would not give the bail, he was to go into slavery. If he afterwards stole, he might be hanged.**

The many provisions made for the public purchases of goods before witnesses, or magistrates, seem to have arisen partly from the frequency of thefts in those days, and partly from the severity with which they were punished. To escape this, it was necessary that every man, and especially a dealer in goods, should be always able to prove his legal property in what he possessed. Hence in Athelstan's laws, it is enacted, that no purchases above twenty pennies should be made outside the gate; but that such bargains should take place within the town, under the witness of the port gerefa, or some unlying man, or of the gerefas in the folc-gemot.¹⁴

Wilk. p. 18. 20.
 Ibid. p. 19.
 Ibid. p. 70.
 Ibid. p. 70.

¹³ Ibid. ¹⁴ Ibid. p. 58.

CHAP IV.

Adultery.

CHAP.

THE criminal intercourse between the sexes is not punished among us as a public wrong committed against the general peace and order of society. No personal punishments, and no criminal prosecutions can be directed against it, although the most trifling assault and the most inconsiderable misdemeanor are liable to such consequences. It is considered by us, if unaccompanied by force, merely as a matter of civil injury, for which the individual must bring an action and get what damages he can; and even this right of action is limited to husbands and fathers; and the latter sues under the guise of a fiction, pretending to have sustained an injury by having lost the service of his daughter.

OUR Saxon legislators did not leave the punishment of this intercourse to the will and judgment of individuals. But they enacted penalties against it as a public wrong, always punishable when it occurred. In the amount of the penalty, however, they followed one of the great principles of their criminal legislation, and varied it according to the rank of the female. The offence with a king's maiden incurred a payment as high as to kill a freeman, which was fifty shillings '; with his grinding servant half that sum, and with his third sort twelve shillings

WITH an earl's cupbearer the penalty was twelve shillings, which was the same that attached if a man

killed another in an earl's town. With a ceorl's cup- CHAP. bearer six shillings was the fine, fifty scættas for his other servant, and thirty for his servant of the third kind.

Even the poor servile esne was protected in his domestic happiness. To invade his connubial rights incurred the penalty of a double compensation.3

FORCIBLE violation was chastised more severely. If the sufferer was a widow, the offender paid twice the value of her mundbyrd. If she were a maiden, fifty shillings were to be paid to her owner, whether father or master, and the invader of her chastity was also to buy her for his wife at the will of her owner. If she was betrothed to another in money, he was to pay twenty shillings; and if she was pregnant, in addition to a penalty of thirty-five shillings, a further fine of fifteen shillings was to be paid to the king.4

THE next laws subjected adulterers to ecclesiastical censure and excommunication, and enjoined the banishment of foreigners who would not abandon such connections.5 The pecuniary penalties were also augmented.

THE laws remained in this state till the time of Alfred. when some new modifications of correction were introduced. He governed the punishment of adultery by the rank of the husband. If he was a twelfhynd-man the offender paid one hundred and twenty shillings. If a syxhynd-man, one hundred shillings. If a ceorl, forty shillings. This was to be paid in live property; but no man was to be personally sold for it.6

But the most curious part of Alfred's regulations on this subject was the refinement with which he distinguished the different steps of the progress towards the completion of the crime. To handle the neck of a ceorl's

³ Ibid. p. 7. ³ Wilk. p. 3. 4 Ibid. ⁵ Ibid. p. 10. 6 Ibid. p. 37.

CHAP. wife incurred a fine of five shillings. To throw her down, without further consequences, occasioned a penalty of ten shillings; and for a subsequent commission of crime, sixty shillings.7

But as we now allow the previous misconduct of the wife to mitigate the amount of the damages paid by the adulterer; so Alfred and his witan provided, that if the wife had transgressed before, the fines of her paramour were to be reduced an half.8

For the rape of a ceorl's slave, five shillings were to be paid the owner, and sixty shillings for the wife. But the violence of a theow on a fellow slave was punished by a personal mutilation.9

⁷ Wilk. p. 37.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid p. 40.

CHAP. V.

The Were and the Mund.

AS the Were and the Mund are expressions which CHAP. occur frequently in the Saxon laws, it may be useful to explain what they mean.

EVERY man had the protection of a were and the privilege of a mund. The were was the legal valuation of an individual, varying according to his situation in life.

Is he was killed, it was the sum his murderer had to pay for the crime — if he committed crimes himself, it was the penalty which, in many cases, he had to discharge.

The were was therefore the penalty by which his safety was guarded, and his crimes, prevented or punished. If he violated certain laws, it was his legal mulct; if he were himself attacked, it was the penalty inflicted on others. Hence it became the measure and mark of a man's personal rank and consequence, because its amount was exactly regulated by his condition in life.

The king's were geld or were payment was thirty thousand thrymsas, or one hundred and twenty pounds; an etheling's was fifteen thousand; a bishop and ealdorman's, eight thousand; a holde's and heh-gerefa's, four thousand; a thegn, two thousand, or twelve hundred shillings; a ceorl's, two hundred and sixty-six thrymsas, or two hundred shillings, unless he had five hides of land at the king's expeditions, and then his were became that

CHAP. of a thegn. The were of a twelfhynd-man was one hundred and twenty shillings, of a syxhynd man was eighty shillings, and of a twyhynd-man thirty shillings.

> A WELSHMAN's were who had some land, and paid gafol to the king, was two hundred and twenty shillings; if he had only half a hide of land, it was eighty shillings; and if he had no land, but was free, it was seventy shillings.2

> THE amount of a person's were determined even the degree of his legal credibility. The oath of a twelfhyndman was equal to the oaths of six ceorls; and if revenge was taken for the murder of a twelfhynd-man, it might be wreaked on six ceorls.3

> To be deprived of this were was the punishment of some crimes, and then the individual lost his greatest social protection.

> THE MUNDBYRD was a right of protection or patronage which individuals possessed for their own benefit and that of others. The violation of it towards themselves. or those whom it sheltered, was punished with a severity, varying according to the rank of the patron. The king's mundbyrd was guarded by a penalty of fifty shillings. That of a widow of an earl's condition was equally protected, while the mund of the widow of the second sort was valued at twenty shillings, of the third sort at twelve shillings, and of the fourth sort at six shillings. If a widow was taken away against her consent, the compensation was to be twice her mund. The penalty of violating a ceorl's mund was six shillings.4 This privilege of the mund seems to be the principle of the doctrine, that every man's house is his castle.

THE mund was the guardian of a man's household

Wilkins, p. 71, 72. 25.

³ Ibid.

I Ibid.

⁴ Ibid. p. 2. 7.

peace, as the were was of his personal safety. If any CHAP. one drew a weapon where men were drinking, and the floor was stained with blood, besides forfeiting to the king fifty shillings, he had to pay a compensation to the master of the house for the violation of his mund-byrd.

5 Wilkins, p. 9.

CHAP. VI.

Their Borh, or Sureties.

THE system of giving sureties, or bail, to answer an accusation, seems to have been coeval with the Saxon nation, and has continued to our times. In one of our earliest laws, it was provided, that the accused should be bound over by his sureties to answer the crime of which he was accused, and to do what the judges

should appoint.

Ir he neglected to find bail, he was to forfeit twelve shillings. These bail were not to be taken indiscriminately; for the laws of Ina enact, that the bail might be refused if the magistrate knew that he acted right in the refusal.

FELONIES are not bailable now; in the Anglo-Saxon times it was otherwise.

If a man was accused of theft, he was to find borh, or sureties; if he could not do this, his goods were taken as security. If he had none he was imprisoned till judgment.³

When a homicide pledged himself to the payment of the were, he was to find borh for it. The borh was to consist of twelve sureties; eight from the paternal line, and four from the maternal.⁴

IF a man was accused of witchcraft, he was to find borh to abstain from it.⁵

Ir a man was found guilty of theft by the ordeal, he

Wilk. p. 8.

^a Ibid. p. 21.

³ Ibid. p. 50.

⁴ Ibid. p. 54.

^{*} Ibid. p. 57.

was to be killed, unless his relations would save him by CHAP. paying his were and ceap-gyld, and give borh for his good behaviour afterwards.6

But the most curious part of the Saxon borh was not the sureties which they who were accused or condemned were to find, to appear to the charge or to perform the judgment pronounced; but it was the system, that every individual should be under bail for his good behaviour.

IT has been mentioned that Alfred is stated to have divided England into counties, hundreds, and tithings: that every person was directed to belong to some tithing or hundred; and that every hundred and tenth were pledged to the preservation of the public peace, and answerable for the conduct of their inhabitants.7

OF this statement, it may be only doubted whether he divided England into counties or shires. These divisions certainly existed before Alfred. The shire is mentioned in the laws of Ina 8: and we know that the counties of Kent, Essex, Sussex, existed as little kingdoms from the first invasion of the Saxons. Of the other counties, we also find many expressly mentioned in the Saxon history anterior to Alfred's reign.

IT may however be true, that he may have separated and named some particular shires, and this partial operation may have occasioned the whole of the general fact to be applied to him.

THE system of placing all the people under borh originated from Alfred, according to the historians; but we first meet with it clearly expressed in the laws in the time of Edgar. By his laws it is thus directed: " Every man shall find and have borh, and the borh

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⁶ Wilkins, p. 65.

⁷ See vol. ii. of this work, p. 304.

^{*} Wilkins, p. 20. 16.

CHAP.

shall produce him to every legal charge, and shall keep him; and if he have done any wrong and escapes, his borh shall bear what he ought to have borne. But if it be theft, and the borh can bring him forward within twelve months, then what the borh paid shall be returned to him." 9

This important and burthensome institution is thus again repeated by the same prince: "This is then what I will; that every man be under borh, both in burghs and out of them; and where this has not been done, let it be settled in every borough and in every hundred." "

It is thus again repeated in the laws of Ethelred: "Every freeman shall have true borh, that the borh may hold him to every right, if he should be accused." The same laws direct that if the accused should fly, and decline the ordeal, the borh was to pay to the accuser the ceap-gyld, and to the lord his were. And as to that part of the population which was in the servile state, their lords were to be the sureties for their conduct.

THE man who was accused and had no borh, might be killed, and buried with the infamous.¹⁴

Nothing seems more repugnant to the decorous feelings of manly independence, than this slavish bondage and anticipated criminality. It degraded every man to the character of an intended culprit: as one whose propensities to crime were so flagrant, that he could not be trusted for his good conduct, to his religion, his reason, his habits, or his honour. But it is likely that the predatory habits of the free population occasioned its adoption.

⁹ Wilkins, p. 78.

¹¹ Ibid. p. 102.

¹³ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid. p. 80.

¹² Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 103.

CHAP. VII.

Their Legal Tribunals.

THE supreme legal tribunal was the witena-gemot, CHAP. which, like our present house of lords, was paramount to every other.

The scire-gemots may be next mentioned. One of these has been mentioned in the chapter on the disputes concerning land: another may be described from the Saxon apograph which Hickes has printed.

This was a shire-gemot at Aylston, in Canute's days. It was composed of a bishop, an ealdorman, the son of an ealdorman; of two persons who came with the king's message, or writ; the sheriff, or scir-gerefa; three other men, and all the thegas in Herefordshire.

To this gemot Edwin came, and spake against his mother, concerning some lands. The bishop asked who would answer for her. Thurcil the White said, he would if he knew the complaint, but that he was ignorant about it. Three thegns of the gemot were shown where she lived, and rode to her, and asked her what dispute she had about the land for which her son was impleading her. She said she had no land which belonged to him, and was angry, earl-like, against her son. She called Leofleda, her relation, the wife of Thurcil the White, and before them thus addressed her: "Here sits Leofleda, my kinswoman; I give thee both my my lands, my gold, and my clothes, and all that I have, after my life." She then said to the thegns, "Do thegn-like, and relate well what I have said to the gemot, before all the good men, and tell them to whom I have given my lands and my property; but

CHAP, to my own son nothing; and pray them to be witness of this."-And they did so, and rode to the gemot, and told all the good men there what she had said to them. Then stood up Thurcil the White in that gemot. and prayed all the thegns to give his wife the lands which her relation had given to her; and they did so; and Thurcil the White rode to St. Ethelbert's minister. by all the folks' leave and witness, and left it to be set down in one Christ's book. 1

> By the laws of Canute it was ordered, that there should be two shire-gemots and three burgh-gemots every year, and the bishop and the ealdorman should attend them. By the laws of Ethelstan, punishments were ordered to those who refused to attend gemots.3 Every man was to have peace in going to the gemot and returning from it, unless he were a thief.

> Sometimes a gemot was convened from eight hundreds, and sometimes from three. 5 On one occasion. the ealdorman of Ely held a plea with a whole hundred below the cemetery at the north gate of the monastery; at another time, a gemot of two hundreds was held at the north door of the monasterv.6

A SHIRE-GEMOT is mentioned at which the earldorman and the king's gerefa presided. "The cause having been opened, and the reasons of both sides heard, by the advice of the magnates there, thirty-six barons, chosen in equal number from the friends on both sides, were appointed judges." These went out to examine the affair, and the monks were asked why and from whose donation they possessed that land. They stated their title, and length of possession. They were asked if they would dare to affirm this statement on the sacrament,

^{*} Hickes, Dissert. Epist. p. 2.

³ Ibid. p. 60.

³ Gale, 469, 473.

^a Wilkins, p. 136.

⁴ Ibid, p. 136.

[•] Ibid. p. 473. 475.

that the controversy might be terminated. The monks CHAP. were going to do this, but the ealdorman would not suffer them to swear before a secular power. He therefore declared himself to be their protector, the witness of their devotion and credibility, alleging that the exhibition of the cautionary oath belonged to him. All who were present admired the speech of the ealdorman, and determined that the oath was unnecessary; and for the false suit and unjust vexation of the relations who had claimed the lands from the monastery, they adjudged all the landed property and goods of the other to be at the king's mercy. The king's gerefa, and the other great men, then interfered; and the complainant, perceiving the peril of his situation, publicly abjured the land in question, and pledged his faith never to disturb the monastery in its possession: a reconciliation then took place.7 The administration of justice in this affair seems to have been very summary and arbitrary, and not very compatible with our notions of legal evidence.

We have one account of a criminal prosecution. A wife having poisoned a child, the bishop cited her and her husband to the gemot; he did not appear, though three times summoned. The king in anger sent his writ, and ordered him, that, "admitting no causes of delay," he should hasten to the court. He came, and before the king and the bishop affirmed his innocence. It was decreed that he should return home, and that on the summons of the bishop he should attend on a stated day at a stated place, with eleven jurators, and that his wife should bring as many of her sex, and clear their fame and the conscience of others by oath. On the appointed day, and in the meadow where the child was buried, the cause was agitated. The relics, which an abbot brought, were placed upon a hillock, before which

CHAP. the husband, extending his right arm, swore that he had never consented to his son's death, nor knew his murderer, nor how he had been killed. The wife denying the fact, the hillock was opened by the bishop's command, and the bones of the child appeared. The wife at last fell at the prelate's feet, confessed the crime, and implored mercy. The conclusion of the whole was, that the accused gave a handsome present of land to the ecclesiastics concerned, as a conciliatory atonement.

> A BISHOP having made a contract for land with a drunken Dane, the seller, when sober, refused to fulfil it. The cause was argued in the king's forum; the fact of the bargain was proved; and the king adjudged the land to the bishop, and the money to the Dane.9 The forum regis is mentioned again. 10

> THE folc-gemot occurs in the laws. "It is established for ceap-men, or merchants, that they bring the men that they lead with them before the king's gerefa in the folc-gemot, and say how many of them there be, and that they take these men up with them, that they may bring them again to the folc-gemot, if sued. And when they shall want to have more men with them in their journey, they shall announce it as often as it occurs to the king's gerefa, in the witness of the folcgemot." 11

> THESE folc-gemots were ordered not to be held on a Sunday; and if any one disturbed them by a drawn weapon, he had to pay a wite of one hundred and twenty shillings to the ealdorman. **

> THE following may be considered as proceedings before a folc-gemot. Begmund having unjustly seized some lands of a monastery, when the ealdorman came to Ely, the offenders were summoned to the placitum, of

^{8 3} Gale, 440. 9 Ibid. 442.

¹⁰ Ibid. 444.

¹¹ Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 41.

¹³ Wilk. 42.

the citizens and of the hundred, several times, but they never appeared. The abbot did not desist, but renewed his pleading, both within and without the city, and often made his complaint to the people. At length the ealdorman, coming to Cambridge, held a great placitum of the citizens and hundreds, before twenty-four judges. There the abbot narrated before all, how Begmund had seized his lands, and though summoned had not appeared. They adjudged the land to the abbot, and decreed Begmund to pay the produce of his fishery to the abbot for six years, and to give the king the were; and, if he neglected to pay, they authorised a seizure of his goods.¹³

Much of their judicial proceedings rested on oaths, and therefore their punishment of perjury was severe. A perjured man is usually classed with witches, murderers, and the most obnoxious beings in society: he was declared unworthy of the ordeal; he was disabled from being a witness again, and if he died he was denied Christian burial.¹⁴

WE have some specimens of the oaths they took:

THE oath of a plaintiff in the case of theft was, "In the Lord: As I urge this accusation with full folc-right, and without fiction, deceit, or any fraud; so from me was that thing stolen of which I complain, and which I found again with N."

Another oath of a plaintiff was, "In the Lord: I accuse not N. neither for hate nor art, nor unjust avarice, nor do I know any thing more true, but so my mind said to me, and I myself tell for truth, that he was the thief of my goods."

A DEFENDANT'S oath was, "In the Lord: I am innocent both in word and deed of that charge of which N. accused me."

²³ Hist. El. 3 Gale, 478. ²⁴ Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 53. 61. 49.

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A WITNESS'S oath was, "In the name of the Almighty God: As I here stand in true witness, unbidden and unbought; so I oversaw it with mine eyes and overheard it with mine ears, what I have said."

THE oath of those who swore for others was, "In the Lord: the oath is clean and upright that N. swore." 15

¹⁵ Wilk. Leg. Sax. 63, 64.

CHAP. VIII.

Their Ordeals and legal Punishments.

TYE have a full account of the Anglo-Saxon ordeals, CHAP. of hot water and hot iron, in the laws of Ina.

THE iron was to be three pounds in weight for the threefold trial, and therefore probably one pound only for the more simple charge; and the accused was to have the option, whether he would prefer the water "ordal" or the iron " ordal."

No man was to go within the church after the fire was lighted by which the ordeal was to be heated, except the priest and the accused. The distance of nine feet was to be then measured out, from the stake, of the length of the foot of the accused. If the trial was to be by hot water, the water was heated till it boiled furiously; and the vessel that contained it was to be iron or copper, lead or clay.

IF the charge was of the kind they called anfeald, or simple, the accused was to immerge his hand as far as the wrist in the water, to take out the stone: if the charge was of threefold magnitude, he was to plunge his arm up to the elbow.

When the ordeal was ready, two men were to enter of each side, and to agree that the water was boiling furiously. Then an equal number of men were to enter from each side, and to stand along the church on both sides of the ordeal, all fasting. After this the priest was to sprinkle them with holy water, of which each was to taste; they were to kiss the Gospels, and to be signed with the cross. All this time the fire was not to be CHAP. VIII.

mended any more; but the iron, if the ordeal was to be by hot iron, was to lie on the coals till the last collect was finished; and it was then to be placed on the staples which were to sustain it.

While the accused was snatching the stone out of the water, or carrying the hot iron for the space of nine feet, nothing was to be said but a prayer to the Deity to discover the truth. The hand was to be then bound up and sealed, and to be kept so for three days; after that time the seal and the bandage were removed, and the hand was to be examined, to see whether it was foul or clear.

From this plain account, the ordeal was not so terrible as it may at first sight appear; because, independently of the opportunity which the accused had, by going alone into the church, of making terms with the priest, and of the ease with which his dexterity could have substituted cold iron or stone for the heated substances. at the moment of the trial, and the impossibility of the detection, amid the previous forms of the holy water, the diminution of the fire, prayers on the occasion, and the distance of the few spectators; independently of these circumstances, the actual endurance of the ordeal admitted many chances of acquittal. It was not exacted that the hand should not be burnt, but that after the space of three days it should not exhibit that appearance which would be called foul, or guilty. As the iron was to be carried only for the space of nine of the feet of the accused, it would be hardly two seconds in his hand. The hand was not to be immediately inspected, but it was carefully kept from air, which would irritate the wound, and was left to the chances of a good constitution to be so far healed in three days as to discover those appearances, when inspected, which were allowed

Wilk. Leg. Inæ, p. 27.

to be satisfactory. Besides, there was, no doubt, much CHAP. preparatory training, suggested by the more experienced, which would indurate the epidermis so much as to make it less sensible to the action of the hot substances which it was to hold. 2



Ordeals were forbidden on festivals and fast-days. 3

Or the single ordeal, it was ordered, that if the persons had been accused of theft, and were found guilty by it, and did not know who would be their borh, they should be put into prison, and be treated as the laws had enjoined.4

An accused mint-master was to undergo the ordeal of the hot-iron. 5

THE ordeal might be compounded for.6

THE law of Ethelstan added some directions as to the ordeal. Whoever appealed to it was to go three nights before to the priest who was to transact it, and should feed on bread and salt, water and herbs. He was to be present at the masses in the mean time, and make his offerings and receive the holy sacrament on the day of his going through the ordeal; and he should swear, that with folc-right he was guiltless of the accusation before he went to the ordeal. If the trial was the hot water, he was to plunge his arm half-way above the elbow on the rope. If the ordeal was the iron, three days were to pass before it was examined. They who attended were to have fasted, and not to exceed twelve in number of either side; or the ordeal was to be void unless they departed.7

A THIEF found guilty by the ordeal was to be killed, unless his relations redeemed him by paying his were,

² Some authors have mentioned the preparations that were used to indurate the skin.

³ Wilk. p. 53.

⁴ Ibid. p. 57.

⁵ Ibid. p. 59.

⁶ Ibid. p. 60.

⁷ Ibid. p. 61.

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and the value of the goods, and giving borh for his good behaviour. 8

THE command of the ordeals must have thrown great power into the hands of the church; and as in most cases they who appealed to them did so from choice, it is probable, that whoever expressed this deference to the ecclesiastical order were rewarded for the compliment, as far as discretion and contrivance would permit.

The ordeal was a trial, not a punishment. The most popular of the legal punishments were the pecuniary mulcts. But as the imperfection and inutility of these could not be always disguised—as they were sometimes impunity to the rich, who could afford them, and to the poor, who had nothing to pay them with, other punishments were enacted. Among these we find imprisonment, outlawry 10, banishment 12, slavery 12, and transportation 13. In other cases we have whipping 14, branding 15, the pillory 16, amputation of limb 17, mutilation of the nose and ears and lips 18, the eyes plucked out, hair torn off 19, stoning 20, and hanging. 21 Nations not civilised have barbarous punishments.

⁸ Wilk. 65. For the ordeal of other nations, see Muratori, ev.; and Du Cange.

⁹ Wilkins, Leg. Sax. 34.70.

Wikins, Lieg. Dak. Jr. 10

¹¹ Sax. Chron.

³³ Ibid. p. 12. ²⁵ Ibid. p. 139.

[&]quot; 17 Ibid. p. 18. 139. 134.

¹⁹ Ibid. p. 138.

ar Ibid. p. 18. 70. 139.

²⁰ Ibid. p. 74. Sax. Chron.

¹² Wilk. 12. 15. 18. 20. 50.

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 12. 22. 52, 53. 81.

¹⁶ Ibid. p. 11. 75. 54.

^{*8} Ibid. p. 138. 142.

¹⁰ Ibid. p. 67.

CHAP. IX.

The Trial by Jury.

IN considering the origin of the happy and wise CHAP. institution of the English Jury, which has contributed so much to the excellence of our national character, and to the support of our constitutional liberty, it is impossible not to feel considerable diffidence and difficulty. It is painful to decide upon a subject on which great men have previously differed. It is peculiarly desirable to trace, if possible, the seed, bud, and progressive vegetation of a tree so beautiful and so venerable.

It is not contested that the institution of a jury existed in the time of the Conqueror. The document which remains of the dispute between Gundulf, the bishop of Rochester, and Pichot, the sheriff, ascertains this fact. We will state the leading circumstances of this valuable account.

THE question was, Whether some land belonged to the church or to the king? "The king commanded that all the men of the county should be gathered together, that by their judgment it might be more justly ascertained to whom the land belonged." This was obviously a shire-gemot.

"They being assembled, from fear of the sheriff, affirmed that the land was the king's: but as the bishop of Bayeux, who presided at that placitum, did not believe them, he ordered, that if they knew that what they said was true, they should choose twelve from among themselves, who should confirm with an oath what all had

CHAP. declared. But these, when they had withdrawn to counsel, and were there harassed by the sheriff through his messenger, returned and swore to the truth of what they asserted."

> By this decision the land became the king's. But a monk, who knew how the fact really stood, assured the bishop of Rochester of the falsehood of their oath, who communicated the information to the bishop of Bayeux. The bishop, after hearing the monk, sent for one of the twelve, who, falling at his feet, confessed that he had forsworn himself. The man on whose oath they had sworn theirs, made a similar avowal.

> On this the bishop "ordered the sheriff to send the rest to London, and twelve other men from the best in the county, who confirmed that to be true which they had sworn."

> THEY were all adjudged to be perjured, because the man whose evidence they had accredited had avowed his perjury. The church recovered the land; and when " the last twelve wished to affirm that they had not consented with those who had sworn, the bishop said they must prove this by the iron ordeal. And because they undertook this, and could not do it, they were fined three hundred pounds to the king, by the judgment of other men of the county." 1

> By this narration, we find that a shire-gemot determined on the dispute, in the first instance; but that in consequence of the doubts of the presiding judge, they chose from among themselves twelve who swore to the truth of what they had decided, and whose determination decided the case.

> THE jury appears to me to have been an institution of progressive growth, and its principle may be traced to the

Thorpe, Regist. Roffen, 32.

earliest Anglo-Saxon times. One of the judicial customs CHAP. of the Saxons was, that a man might be cleared of the accusation of certain crimes, if an appointed number of persons came forward and swore that they believed him innocent of the allegation. These men were literally juratores, who swore to a veredictum; who so far determined the facts of the case as to acquit the person in whose favour they swore. Such an oath, and such an acquittal, is a jury in its earliest and rudest shape; and it is remarkable, that for accusations of any consequence among the Saxons of the Continent, twelve juratores were the number required for an acquittal. Thus, for the wound of a noble, which produced blood, or disclosed the bone, or broke a limb; or if one seized another by the hair, or threw him into the water; in these and some other cases twelve juratores were required. Similar customs may be observed in the laws of the Continental Angli and Frisiones, though sometimes the number of the jury or juratores varied according to the charge; every number being appointed, from three to forty-eight.3 In the laws of the Ripuarii, we find that in certain cases the oaths of even seventy-two persons were necessary to his acquittal.4 It is obvious, from their numbers, that these could not have been witnesses to the facts alleged. Nor can we suppose that they came forward with the intention of wilful and suborned perjury. They could only be persons who, after hearing and weighing the facts of the case, proffered their deliberate oaths that the accused was innocent of the charge. And this was performing one of the most important functions of our modern juries.

In the laws of the Alemanni, the principle appears

² Lindenborg. Leg. Sax. p. 474.

³ Lind. Lex. Angli. 482. and Lex Fris. 490.

⁴ Lind, Lex Ripuar. p. 451.

CHAP, more explicitly; for in these the persons who are to take the oath of acquittal are called nominati, or persons named. And in the case of murdering the messenger of a dux, the juratores were to be twelve named and twelve elected.⁵ This named and elected jury seems to approximate very closely to our present institution.

> In referring to our own Anglo-Saxon laws, we find three jurators mentioned in those of the kings of Kent, in the latter end of the seventh century. If a freeman were accused of theft, he was to make compensation, or to acquit himself by the oaths of four nim æpoa men. These words are literally "the number of four legal men," or "four of the numbered legal men." 6 In either construction they point to a meaning similar to the nominati in the laws of the Alemanni; that is, persons legally appointed as jurators.

> THE principle of an acquittal by the peers of the party accused appears in the laws of Wihtræd, where the clergyman is to be acquitted by four of his equals, and the ceorlisc man by four of his own rank.7

> An acquittal from walreaf, or the plunder of the dead, required the oaths of forty-eight full-born 8 thegns. These, of course, could not be witnesses. They must have been a selection of so many in the shire-gemot, who, on hearing the facts of the accusation, would, upon their oaths, absolve the accused. And what is this but a jury? The Danish colonists probably used it.

In the treaty between Alfred and Guthrun, more lights appear: " If any accuse the king's thegn of manslaughter (manslihtes), if he dare absolve himself, let him do it by twelve king's thegns. If the accused be less than a king's thegn, let him absolve himself by eleven

⁵ Lind. Lex Aleman. p. 370, 371.

⁶ Leg. Hloth. Wilk. p. 8. 7 Leg. Wiht. Wilk. p. 12.

Leg. Inæ. Wilk. 27.

of his equals, and one king's thegn." 9 Here the number C'HAP. of twelve, and the principle of the peers, both appear

Something of the principle of a jury appears to us in these laws: " If any one takes cattle, let five of his neighbours be named, and out of these, let him get one that will swear with him, that he took it to himself according to folc-right; and he that will implead him, let ten men be named to him, and let him get two of these and swear that it was born in his possession, without the rim æthe, the oath of number, and let this cyre oath stand above twenty pennies."

" Let him who prays condemnation for a slain thief get two paternal and one maternal relation, and give the oath that they knew of no theft in their kinsman, and that he did not deserve death for that crime; and let some twelve go and try him." 10

This passage seems to have an allusion to this subject:

"LET there be named, in the district of every gerefa, as many men as are known to be unlying men, that they may witness every dispute, and be the oaths of these unlying men of the value of the property without "choice." These men, so named, may have been the rim æwda men noticed before.

" IF any kill a thief that has taken refuge within the time allowed, let him compensate for the mund byrde; or let some twelve absolve him that he knew not the jurisdiction." 18

This injunction seems also to provide a jury: On an accusation of idolatry or witchcraft, "if it be a king's thegn who denies it, let there be then named to him twelve, and let him take twelve of his relations, and

¹⁰ Ibid. p. 58. 11 Ibid. p. 62. 9 Wilk. p. 47.

¹³ Ibid. p. 63.

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CHAP. twelve strangers; and if he fails, let him pay for the violation of the law, or ten half marcs." 13 This seems. a jury: twelve persons were to be appointed, and he was to add twelve of his kinsfolks; and this law concerning Northumbria, where they were chiefly Danes, as many foreigners were to be added. If they absolved him, he was cleared; if not, he was to be mulcted. It is one of the rules established concerning our jury, that a foreigner has a right to have half of the jury foreigners.

THE following law of Ethelred has the same application:

" LET there be gemots in every wæpentace; and let twelve of the eldest thegas go out with the gerefa, and swear on the relics, which shall be given into their hands, that they will condemn no innocent man, nor screen any that is guilty." 14 This passage seems to have no meaning but so far as it alludes to a jury.

Two other laws are as applicable: " If any be accused that he has fed the man who hath broken our. lord's peace, let him absolve himself with thrinna twelve. and let the gerefa name the absolving persons; and this law shall stand where the thegns are of the same mind. If they differ, let it stand as eight of them shall declare." 15 This is surely a jury, of whom eight constituted the legal majority.

THERE is another passage, in the laws made by the English witan and the Welsh counsellors, which bears upon this subject: "Twelve lahmen, of whom six shall be English and six shall be Welsh, shall enjoin right. They shall lose all that they have if they enjoin erroneously, or absolve themselves that they knew no better." 16

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 117. 15 Ibid. p. 118. 13 Wilk. p. 100.

¹⁶ Ibid. p. 125.

On the whole, it would seem that the custom of CHAP. letting the oaths of a certain number of men determine legal disputes in favour of the person for whom they swore, was the origin of the English jury. It was an improvement on this ancient custom, that the jurators were named by the court instead of being selected by the parties. It was a further progress towards our present mode of jury, that the jurators were to hear the statements of both parties before they gave their deciding veredictum, or oath of the truth. While the ordeals were popular, the trials by jurators were little used; but as these blind appeals to Heaven became unfashionable, the process of the legal tribunals was more resorted to, and juries became more frequent. 17

¹⁷ The following passage in the old law-book, the Mirror, shows that jurors were used in the time of Alfred. It says of this king, "Il pendist les suitors d'Dorcester, pur ceo que ils judgerent un home a la mort per jurors de lour franchise pur felony que il fist; en le forrein et dount ils ne puissent conustre pur la forrainte." p. 300.

APPENDIX.

No. II.

ON THE AGRICULTURE AND LANDED PRO-PERTY OF THE ANGLO-SAXONS.

CHAP. I.

Their Husbandry.

THE agricultural state may have been coeval with the pastoral, in the climates of the East, where nature is so profuse of her rural gifts, that cultivation is scarcely requisite; but in the more ungenial regions of the north of Europe, where the food of man is not to be obtained from the earth, without the union of skill and labour, the pastoral state seems to have been the earliest occupation of uncivilised man. While this taste prevailed, agricultural attentions were disreputable and despised, as among the ancient Germans. But when population became more numerous and less migratory, husbandry rose in human estimation and use, until at length it became indispensable to the subsistence of the nation who pursued it.

WHEN the Anglo-Saxons invaded England they came into a country which had been under the Roman power for about four hundred years, and where agri-

culture, after its more complete subjection by Agricola, CHAP. had been so much encouraged, that it had become one of the western granaries of the empire. The Britons, therefore, of the fifth century may be considered to have pursued the best system of husbandry then in use, and their lands to have been extensively cultivated with all those exterior circumstances which mark established proprietorship and improvement; as small farms; inclosed fields; regular divisions into meadow, arable, pasture, and wood; fixed boundaries; planted hedges; artificial dykes and ditches; selected spots for vineyards, gardens, and orchards; connecting roads and paths; scattered villages, and larger towns, with appropriated names for every spot and object that marked the limits of each property, or the course of each way. All these appear in the earliest Saxon charters, and before the combating invaders had time or ability to make them, if they had not found them in the island. Into such a country the Anglo-Saxon adventurers came, and by these facilities to rural civilisation soon became an agricultural people. The natives, whom they despised, conquered, and enslaved, became their educators and servants in the new arts, which they had to learn, of grazing and tillage; and the previous cultivation practised by the Romanised Britons will best account for the numerous divisions, and accurate and precise descriptions of land which occur in almost all the Saxon charters. No modern conveyance could more accurately distinguish or describe the boundaries of the premises which it conveyed.

THE Anglo-Saxons seem to have had both large and small farms, as both are enumerated in the Domesday Register; and it is most probable that the more extensive possessions, though belonging to one proprietor, were cultivated in small subdivisions. The number of

CHAP, petty proprietors was, according to the same record, greater in Essex, Norfolk, and Suffolk, where the Northmen colonists settled themselves, than in other parts of the island. But the British custom of gavelkind, which preceded the Anglo-Saxon invasions, was favourable to the increase of small proprietorships. Large farms seem to be the best adapted to bring an extensive surface of the country into a state of cultivation, but not for raising the greatest quantity of produce from every part. Small farms, manual labour, and that minute and frequent tillage which the larger owner will not think of, or descend to, will probably obtain the most abundant harvests from the particular lands to which they are applied.

> IT must, however, be recollected that large portions of the country were, in every part, in a state of forests, lakes, pools, marsh, moor, slough, and heath; but they turned the watery parts, which they had not the skill or the means to drain, to the best advantage by making them productive of fish. In most of their ditches we read of eels, and in several descriptions, of fish waters. Brooks and bourns were so common as to form parts of almost all their boundaries.

> THE Anglo-Saxons cultivated the art of husbandry with some attention. The articles which they raised from the earth, and the animals which they fed, have been mentioned in the chapter on their food. A few particulars of their practical husbandry need only be mentioned here.

> THEY used hedges and ditches to separate their fields and lands; and these were made necessary by law; for if a freeman broke through a hedge, he had to pay six

These appear in most of the boundaries described in the Saxon grants. Hedges are mentioned in Domesday. A nemus ad sepes faciendum occurs in Middlesex, fo. 127.

shillings.² A coorl was ordered to keep his farm in-CHAP. closed both winter and summer; and if damage arose to any one who suffered his gate to be open, and his hedge to be broken down, he was subjected to legal consequences.³

They had common of pasture attached to the different portions of land which they possessed; and they had other extensive districts laid out in meadow. Every estate had also an appropriated quantity of wood. In Domesday-book, the ploughed land, the meadow, the pasture, and the wood, are separately mentioned, and their different quantities estimated.

They sowed their wheat in spring.⁴ It was a law, that he who had twenty hides of land should take care that there should be twelve hides of it sown when he was to leave it.⁵

They had ploughs, rakes, sickles, scythes, forks, and flails, very like those that have been commonly used in this country. They had also carts or waggons. Their wind-mills and water-mills are frequently mentioned, in every period of their history.

Their woods were an object of their legislative attention. If any one burnt or cut down another's wood without permission, he was to pay five shillings for every great tree, and five pennies for every other, and thirty shillings besides, as a penalty. By another law, this offence was more severely punished.

THEY were careful of the sheep. It was ordered by an express law, that these animals should keep their

² Wilk. Leg. 4.

³ Ibid. p. 21.

⁴ Bede, p. 244.

⁵ Wilk. Leg. p. 25.

⁶ Their drawings in their MSS, show a great resemblance between the Saxon instruments and those still used in the northern counties of England.

⁷ Wilk. p. 37.

² Ibid. p. 21.

CHAP. fleece until midsummer, and that the value of a sheep should be one shilling until a fortnight after Easter.9

THERE are some curious delineations in a Saxon calendar, which illustrate some of their agricultural labours. 10

In January are men ploughing with four oxen; one drives, another holds the plough, and another scatters seeds.

In February men are represented as cutting or pruning trees, of which some resemble vines.

In March one is digging, another is with a pick-axe, and a third is sowing.

In April three persons are pictured as sitting and drinking, with two attendants; another is pouring out liquor into a horn; and another is holding a horn to his mouth.

In May a shepherd is sitting; his flocks are about, and one man has a lamb in his arms; other persons are looking on.

In June some are reaping with a sickle, and some putting the corn into a cart. A man is blowing a horn while they are working.

In July they are felling trees.

In August they are mowing.

In September is a boar-hunting.

In October is hawking.

In November a smithery is shown.

In December two men are thrashing, others are carrying the grain in a basket; one has a measure, as if to ascertain the quantity; and another on a notched stick, seems to be marking what is measured and taken away.

⁹ Wilk. Leg. p. 25, 23.

¹º Cott. MS. Tib. B. 5. See them copied in Strutt's Hord. Angl. vol. i. tab. x. xi. xii.

In the Saxon dialogues already quoted, the ploughman CHAP. gives this account of his duty:

"I labour much. I go out at day-break, urging the oxen to the field, and I yoke them to the plough (the pyl). It is not yet so stark winter that I dare keep close at home, for fear of my lord; but the oxen being yoked, and the share and cultro fastened on, I ought to plough every day one entire field, or more. I have a boy to threaten the oxen with a goad, who is now hoarse through cold and bawling. I ought also to fill the binns of the oxen with hay, and water them, and carry out their soil." He adds, "It is a great labour, because I am not free."

In the same MSS, we have this statement of a shep-herd's and a cowherd's duty. "In the first part of the morning I drive my sheep to their pasture, and stand over them in heat and in cold with dogs, lest the wolves destroy them. I lead them back to their folds, and milk them twice a day; and I move their folds, and make cheese and butter; and I am faithful to my lord." The other says, "When the ploughman separates the oxen, I lead them to the meadows; and all night I stand watching over them, on account of thieves; and again, in the morning, I take them to the plough, well fed and watered."

Some circumstances may be selected from their grants, which illustrate the customs and produce of an Anglo-Saxon farm. "I give food for seventy swine in that woody allotment which the countrymen call Wulferdinleh, and five waggons full of good twigs, and every year an oak for building, and others for necessary fires, and sufficient wood for burning." ¹¹

A NOBLE lady ordered out of her lands a yearly don-

¹¹ Bede, App. 770.

CHAP, ation of forty ambra of malt, an old ram, four wethers. two hundred and forty loaves, and one weight of bacon and cheese, and four fother of wood, and twenty henfowls. 12

> In Ina's laws, ten hides were to furnish ten vessels of honey, three hundred loaves, twelve ambra of Welsh ale, thirty of clear ale, two old rams, ten wethers, ten geese, twenty hens, ten cheeses, an ambra full of butter, five salmon, twenty pounds weight of fodder, and an hundred eels. 13

> ANOTHER gives ten mittas of malt, five of grits, ten mittas of the flour of wheat, eight gammons, sixteen cheeses, and two fat cows; and in Lent eight salmon.14

Offa, in 785, grants some land, with permission to feed swine in the wood of Andreda; and another district to cut wood for building or for burning; and also wood sufficient to boil salt; and the fishing of one man; with one hundred loaded waggons, and two walking carts, every year. 15

WE frequently find salt-pans, or places to boil salt in, conveyed, as, "with four vessels for the boiling of salt," and "with all the utensils and wells of salt." 16

FISHERIES were frequently given with land. To three plough lands in Kent a fishery on the Thames is 17 added. Ethelstan gives a piece of land for the use of taking fish. 18 So forty acres, with fishing, were given on the condition of receiving every year fifteen salmon. 19 So half of a fishery is given to a monastery, with the buildings and tofts of the fishermen.20

¹³ Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 25. 12 Hickes's Diss. Ep. 10.

^{14 3} Gale, Hist. R. 410.

¹⁵ Astle's MS. Charters, No. 4.

¹⁶ Heming. Chart. Wig. p. 144. p. 48.

¹⁷ Thorpe Regist. 20. 18 Heming, Chart. p. 111. 29 Ibid. p. 171. 20 3 Gafe x. Script. p.405.

A VINEYARD is not unfrequently mentioned in various CHAP. documents. Edgar gives the vineyard situate at Wecet, with the vine-dressers. 22 In Domesday-book, vineyards are noticed in several counties.

A WOLF-PIT is mentioned in one of the boundaries of an estate. 22

In Domesday we frequently meet with parks. Thus, speaking of Rislepe, in Middlesex, it adds, "There is a park (pancur) of beasts of the wood." At St. Alban's and Ware, in Herts, similar parks are mentioned, and in other places. .

GARDENS also occur several times in Domesday. Eight cotarii and their gardens 4 are stated in the manor of Fuleham in Middlesex. And we may remark that Fulham still abounds with market gardeners. A house with its garden is mentioned in the burg of Hertford. 25

Two or three intimations occur in Domesday of the increasing conversion of pasture into arable land. Thus at Borne in Kent, "a pasture from which strangers have ploughed six acres of land." 16

WE have many contracts, extant of the purchases of land by the Anglo-Saxons, from which we may expect to gain some knowledge of the price of land. But this source of information is by no means sufficient to form an accurate criterion, because we cannot tell the degree of cultivation, or the quality of the land transferred; and also because many of the grants seem to have been rather gifts than sales, in which the consideration bears little proportion to the obvious value. A few of the prices given may however be stated. -

I hyde and a field for 100 shillings.

3 hydes for 15l.

³¹ MS. Claud. C.9. p.116.

²³ Domesday, 129. b.

²⁵ Domesday, 132.

^{22 3} Gale, p. 520.

²⁴ Ibid. p. 127. b.

²⁶ Ibid. p. 9.

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10 hydes and two mills for 100 aureos.

7 hydes and an half for 200 aureos. 27

6 cassatorum for 3 pundus argenti.

10 manentium for 31 mancosas.

20 manentium for 10 libris argenti.

2 mansiones for 20 manecusis auri probatissimi. 28

15 manentes for 1500 solidis argenti.

5 manentium for 10 libras inter aurum et argentum.

5 manentium for 150 mancas de puro auro.

8 mansas for 90 mancusa of purest gold.

10 mansas for 30 mancusas of pure gold.

8 mansas for 300 criseis mancusis. 29

It is obvious from this short specimen of the sums mentioned in their documents, that no regular estimate can be formed of the usual price of their land.

By the exorcisms to make fields fertile which remain, we may perceive that our superstitious ancestors thought that they could produce abundant harvests by non-sensical ceremonies and phrases. They who choose may see a long one in Calig. A. 7. It is too long and too absurd to be copied. But we may recollect, in justice to our ancestors, that Cato the censor, has transmitted to us a recipe as ridiculous.

THE course of nature, in the revolutions of the seasons, has suffered no essential change since the deluge, which human records notice. We may therefore presume that the seasons in the Anglo-Saxon period resembled those which preceded and have followed them. Bede calls October Winterfylleth, because winter begins in this month. And we have a description of Anglo-Saxon winter from a disciple of Bede: "The last winter far and wide afflicted our island horribly, by its cold, its frosts, and storms of rain and wind." 30

²⁷ 3 Gale, p. 483. 485. 480. 486.

²³ Heming. Chart. p. 69, 70. 222. 230.

²⁹ MS. Claud. C. 9. ³⁰ 16 Mag. Bib. p. 88.

To give some notion of the state of the atmosphere and CHAP. of the seasons in these times, it may not be uninteresting to mention some of the years which were more remarkable for the calamities of the weather which attended them.

A. D. 763-4. This winter was so severe, for its snow and frost, as to have been thought unparalleled. The frost lasted from the first of October to February. Most of the trees and shrubs perished by the excessive cold. 3x

793. A GREAT famine and mortality. 32

799. VIOLENT tempest, and numerous shipwrecks in the British Ocean. 33

807-8. A very mild and pestilential winter. 34

820. From excessive and continual rains, a great mortality of men and cattle ensued. The harvest was spoilt. Great inundations prevented the autumnal sowing. 35

821. A DREADFUL winter followed. The frost was so long and severe, that not only all the smaller rivers, but even the largest in Europe, as the Seine, the Elbe, the Rhine, and the Danube, were so frozen, that, for above thirty days, waggons passed over them as if over bridges. 36

823. The harvests devastated by hail. A terrible pestilence among men and cattle. 37

824. A dreadful and long winter. Not only animals, but many of the human species, perished by the intenseness of the cold. 38

³¹ Simeon Dunelm, p. 105. Ann. Astron. ap. Ruberi, p. 18. Sigeb. Gembl. p. 551.

³³ Sim. Dun. p. 112.

³³ Ibid. p. 115.

³⁴ Adelmi Benedict. p. 409. 35 Ibid. p. 421. 36 Adelmi Benedict. p. 422. Ann. Astron. p. 46.

³⁷ Adel. B. p. 425. Sigeb. Gemb. p. 561.

³⁹ Ann. Fuld. p.6. Bouquet's Recueil, p. 208. Annales apud Ruberi, p. 49.

CHAP.

832. This year began with excessive rains. A frost succeeded so sudden and intense, that the iced roads were nearly impassable by horses. 39

834. Great storms and excessive falls of rain. 40

851. Severe famine on the continent. 41

869. Great famine and mortality in England. 43

874. A swarm of locusts laid waste the provinces of France. A famine so dreadful followed, that, in the hyperbolical language of the writers, nearly a third part of the population perished.

875. A LONG and inclement winter, succeeded with unusual falls of snow. The frost lasted from the first of November to the end of March. 43

913. A SEVERE winter.

956. A VERY mortal pestilence. 44

976. A SEVERE famine in England. A frost from first November to end of March.

986. A great mortality amongst cattle in England. 45:

987. A DREADFUL flux and fever in England. 46

988. A SUMMER of extreme heat.

989. Great inundations. Very hot summer, unhealthy and unfruitful. Great drought and famine; much snow and rain; and no sowing. 47

1005. A GREAT and dreadful famine in England.

1006. The same over all Europe. 48

4º Annales Ruberi, p. 58.

43 Asser, p. 20.

44 Regino Chron. p. 568. 74. 79.

³⁹ Annales Ruberi, p. 56. Adel. Bened. p. 463.

⁴¹ Sigeb. Gembl. apud Pistorium, p. 565.

⁴³ Aimoini de gestis Fran. p. 489. Sigeb. Gembl. p. 569.

⁴⁵ Sax. Chron. p. 123. 125. Sim. Dun. p. 160. Sig. Gemb. p. 587.

⁴⁶ Flor. Wig. and Sim. Dun. 161.

⁴⁷ Lamb. Schaff. p. 158. Sigeb. Gembl. p. 589.

⁴⁸ Sim. Dun. 165. Sig. Gembl. p. 591.

1014. GREAT sea flood.

1016. Great hail, thunder, and lightning. 49

1022. Extreme heat in the summer.

1039. A SEVERE winter.

1041. Inclement seasons all the year, and unproductive; and great mortality amongst the cattle. 50

1043-4. A DREADFUL famine in England and the continent. A sester of wheat sold for above sixty pennies. 51

1047. An uncommon fall of snow. Trees broken by it. 52

1048. EARTHQUAKE at Worcester, Derby, and other places; and a great mortality. 53

Or the Anglo-Saxon husbandry we may remark, that Domesday Survey gives us some indications that the cultivation of the church lands was much superior to that of any other order of society. They have much less wood upon them, and less common of pasture; and what they had appears often in smaller and more irregular pieces; while their meadow was more abundant, and in more numerous distributions.

the way the while care there

⁴⁹ Sax. Chron. p. 146. Lamb. Schaff. p. 158.

⁵⁰ Sig. Gemb. p. 593. Sim. Dun. p. 180.

⁵¹ Sax. Chron. p. 157. Sig. Gembl. p. 596. The MS. Claud. C.9. mentions that the sextarius of wheat sold for five shillings, p. 129. Henry of Huntingdon says the same, adding, that a sextarius of wheat used to be the burthen of one horse, p. 365.

⁵² Sim. Dun. p. 180. Sig. Gembl. p. 597.

⁵³ Sax. Chron. p. 183.

CHAP. II.

Their Proprietorship in Land and Tenures.

CHAP.

WHEN the Anglo-Saxons established themselves in Britain, a complete revolution in the possession of landed property must have taken place, so far as it concerned the persons of the proprietors. They succeeded by the sword. All the chieftains of the octarchy had many years of warfare to wage, before they could extort the occupation of the country. In such fierce assaults, and such desperate resistance, the largest part of the proprietary body of the Britons must have perished.

What system of tenures the Anglo-Saxon conquerors established, will be best known from the language of their grants. Some antiquaries have promulged very inaccurate ideas on this subject; and we can only hope to escape error, by consulting the documents, and studying the legal phrases of the Anglo-Saxon period.

We find the land distinguished in their laws by various epithets. We there meet with boc lande, gafole land, folc land, bisceopa land, thegne's land, neat land, and frigan earthe. The proprietors of land are called dryhtne, hlaforde, agende or land hlaforde, and land agende. The occupiers of land were named ceorl, geneat, landesman, tunesman 3, and such like.

From Domesday-book, we find, that of some lands, the king was the chief proprietor; of others, the bishops and abbots; of others, several earls and persons of in-

^{*} Wilkins, Leges Sax. p. 43. 47. 49. 65. 76.

² Ibid. p. 2. 10. 11. 15. 21. 28. 58. 63.

³ Ibid. p. 18. 47. 101. 105.

ferior dignity. A few specimens may be given. Thus CHAP. in Sussex

59½ hides. The king had Archbishop of Canterbury, Bishop of Chichester. Abbot of Westminster, Abbot of Fescamp. 135 Bishop Osbern, 149 Abbot of St. Peter, Winchester, 33 Church of Battle, - 601 Abbot of St. Edward, -Comes of Oro. - 1964 Comes of Moriton. - 520 Comes Roger, 2 818 William of Warene. -- 6201 William of Braiose. Odo and Eldred, ...

THESE were the tenentes in capite, the great proprietors in demesne. The men who resided on the land. and in the burgs under these in this county, may be seen in Domesday-book. In other counties, we find the same description of persons possessing land, with the addition of others. Thus the great proprietors in Hertfordshire were the king, the archbishop of Canterbury, five bishops, three abbots, an abbess, two canons, four earls or comites, twenty-four less dignified individuals, and three ladies. Two of these ladies are described as wives. Thus: "Rothais, wife of Richard, son of earl Gislebert, holds Standor, and defends herself for eleven hides; Adeliz, wife of Hugo of Grentmaisnil, holds Brochesborne, and defends herself for five hides and a half." The other was the daughter of Radulf Tailgebosch, and held four hides in Hoderdon.

In Buckinghamshire the chief proprietors were, the king, the archbishop, five bishops, two abbots, an

CHAP.

abbess, a canon, a presbyter, two earls, thirty-eight other individuals; the queen, countess Judith Azelina, wife of Radulf Tailgebosch, the king, thane, and eleemosiners.

But subordinate tenures are also mentioned in this valuable record. Thus the abbess of Berching held Tiburn (Tyburn) under the king, and the canons of St. Paul held of the king five hides in Fulham. Many tenures of this sort appear. 4

To several tenures it is added, that the possessors could not give or sell the land without leave. 5

OTHER tenants are mentioned, who could turn themselves, with their land, wherever they pleased. 6

Land held in elemosinam, or frankalmoigne, also appears. ⁷

Of other tenants it is said, that they held certain manors, but rendered no service to the abbot, except thirty shillings a year. 8

SOCHMANNI, and the terra sochmannorum, are mentioned: of two of them it is expressed, that they could sell without leave; while another is declared unable to give or sell without his lord's leave. Two other sochmanni are called Men of the bishop of London. 9

ONE of the sochmen, who could do what he chose with the land, was a canon of St. Paul's.

Or the tenures which appear from the Anglo-Saxon grants, the first that may be noticed is that of pure free-hold of inheritance, unconnected with any limitation or service. Thus, in a conveyance made between 691 and 694, the kinsman of the king of Essex gives some land, amounting to 40 manentium. The conveying words are, "I Hodilredus, the kinsman of Sebbi, in the province

⁴ Domesday-book.

⁶ Ibid. fo. 6, 7. 129.

⁸ Ibid. fo. 12.

⁵ Ibid. fo. 129.

⁷ Ibid. fo. 12. 137.

⁹ Ibid. fo. 11. 129.

of the East Saxons, with his consent, of my own will, in C H A P. sound mind; and by just advice, for ever deliver to thee, and, from my right, transcribe into thine, the land, &c. with all things belonging to it, with the fields, wood, meadows, and marsh, that, as well thou as thy posterity, may hold, possess, and have free power to do with the land whatsoever thou wilt." 10

In another, dated in 704, from a king to a bishop, of 30 cassatorum, at Tincenhom, in Middlesex, the words are, "We have decreed to give in dominio to Waldhare, bishop, part of a field, &c. The possession of this land so as aforesaid, with fields to be sowed, pastures, meadows, marshes, fisheries, rivers, closes, and appurtenances, we deliver to be possessed in dominio by the above bishop in perpetual right, and that he have the free power of doing whatsoever he will."

THERE seems to have been no prescribed form of words for the conveyance of a freehold estate, because we find that almost every grant varies in some of its phrases. The most essential requisite seems to have been that the words should imply an intended perpetuity of possession. One other specimen of a freehold grant, not quite so absolute as the above, may be added: "That it may be in his power, and may remain firmly fixed in hereditary right, both free from the services of all secular things within and without, and from all burden and injury of greater or smaller causes, and that he may have the liberty of changing or giving it in his life, and after his death may have the power of leaving it to whomsoever he will." 12

FREEHOLD estates also occur, made subject to the

¹⁰ MS. Augustus, 2, 26. printed in Smith's Appendix to Bede, p. 748.

¹¹ Appendix to Bede, p. 749.

³² MS. Charters of the late Mr. Astle, No. 7.

CHAP. three great services to which almost all lands were liable. In these cases the duty of military expedition, and bridge and castle work, are expressly excepted. 13 A modification of this freehold tenure is, where the grant is for the life of the person receiving it, with a power of giving it to any person after his death in perpetual inheritance. This kind of estate very frequently occurs in the Saxon grants, and differs from the pure and absolute freehold, inasmuch as it does not appear that the tenant for life had the liberty of alienating it before his death, nor that it was descendible to his heirs if he made no testamentary devise.

> Thus in a grant dated 756, the part which lawyers call the habendum, and which determines the nature of the tenure is thus expressed: "I will give it him for ever - That he may have and possess it as long as he lives, and after that time, that he may leave it to any person he shall please, to be possessed in hereditary right, with the same liberty in which it is granted to him 27 14

> OTHERS are in these phrases: "To have and possess it in his own possession, and for his days to enjoy it happily, and after his days to leave to whomsoever shall be agreeable to him in everlasting inheritance." 15

> A VERY common tenure in the Anglo-Saxon times was, that the person to whom an estate was conveyed should hold it for his life, and should have the power of giving it after his death to any one, two, three, or more heirs, as mentioned in the grant; after which it should revert either to the original proprietor making the grant, or to some ecclesiastical body or other person mentioned in it.

²³ MS. Claud. C. 9. p. 112, 113.

²⁴ Smith's App. p. 767.

¹⁵ Astle's MS. Charters, Nos. 12 and 16.

СНАР.

Thus Oswald gives lands to a person, in the stability of perpetual inheritance; that in having, he may hold it, and possessing it, may enjoy it, for the length of his life. After his death he might leave it to any two heirs whom he preferred, to have it continuedly — After their death it was to revert to the church of St. Mary. 16

In 984 Oswald gave to his kinsman, Eadwig, and his wife, three mansæ, for their lives. If the husband survived her, he was to be deemed the first possessor, or heir of the land; or if she survived, she was to be the first heir. They were empowered to leave all to their offspring, if they had any: if not, the survivor was to leave it to any two heirs. 17

Thus a bishop gave to Berhtwulf, the Mercian king, certain lands "for the space of the days of five men, to have and to enjoy it with justice; and after the number of their days, that it may be returned, without any dissension or conflict, to the church in Worcester." This same land Berhtwulf gave to his minister, Ecbercht, "for the space of the days of five men, as before it was given to him." 18

Sometimes an attempt was made to possess the land beyond the number of lives indicated. It is mentioned in a charter, that one Cynethryth had conveyed some land for three lives, and that Ælsted had added three more lives; when it was discovered, by inspecting the hereditarios libros of the king, Kenulf, who first granted it, that the person originally receiving it had only the power of giving it for one life. Consequently the subsequent grants were set aside. ¹⁹

A life estate was also a very frequent tenure. Sometimes the remainder that was to follow a life estate was expressed. This was usually to the church.

¹⁶ Smith's App. Bede, p.773.

²⁷ Ibid. p. 778.

¹⁸ Heming. Chart. p. 6. 8. 19 Ibid. p. 29.

CHAP. II. Thus Aldred, in the middle of the eighth century, gave a monastery to his relation, "on condition that she possess it as long as she lives, and when she goes the way of her fathers," it was to revert to the church of Worcester, into the jus of the episcopal seat. An archbishop devised land to a person for life, with remainder to an abbey. 12

THE land passing by these grants was called Bocland, as the land held by bishops was mentioned as Bisceopa land; the land of thegns was Thegnes land, and the land of earles was Earles land. All these occur in Domesday-book. There was also King's land, Gerefa land, and such like; but these names attached to land seem rather to express the quality of the demesne proprietors than any other circumstance.

ONE grant is rather singular, in the limitations of the estate which it conveys. The king gives a manor to Edred, and permits Edred to give it to Lulla and Sigethrythe, who are enjoined to give part of the land to Eaulfe and Herewine. But Eaulfe was to give half of this part to Biarnulve, and to enjoy the other half for his own life, with the power of devising it as he pleased.²²

To these tenures we may add the Gafoleland, or land granted or demised on the condition of paying some contribution in money or other property. Thus archbishop Ealdulf, in 996, gave land to a miles, for his life and two heirs, but annexed a condition, that they should provide every year fifteen salmon.²³ An abbot and the monks demised twenty-seven acres to a person, that he

³⁰ Smith's App. Bede, p. 765.

³¹ MS. Claud. C. 9. p. 125.

²² Astle's MS. Charters, No. 20.

²³ Heming. Chart. p. 191.

might have them in stipendium as long as he served CHAP. them well.24

An ancient lease is mentioned in the year 852, by which Ceolred, abbot of Medeshamstede, and the monks. let (leot) to Wulfred the land at Sempigaham for her life, on condition that he gave (besides some other land) a yearly rent of sixty fother of wood, twelve fother of græfan (which may mean coals) six fother of turf, two tuns full of clear ale, two slain cattle, six hundred loaves, ten mittan of Welsh ale, one horse, thirty shillings, and a night's lodging. 25 A marsh was leased at the rent of two thousand eels. 26 By the laws, a ceorl, who had gafol lande, was estimated at two hundred shillings.37

^{24 3} Gale's Script. p. 475.

²⁵ Sax. Chron. p. 75.

²⁶ 3 Gale's Script. p. 477.

²⁷ Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 47.

CHAP, III.

The Burdens to which Lands were liable, and their Privileges.

CHAP.

THE oldest Saxon grants we have, contain reservations of services which the possessor of the land had to perform; and, from the language of those which have survived to our times, we perceive that certain burdens, though varying in kind and quantity, were attached to estates in every age. Some few were exempted from any; a larger proportion were freed from all but the three great necessities, which in one charter are described to be, "what it is necessary that all people should do, and from which work none can be 'excused."

THESE three common labours, or universal necessities, as they are frequently styled, are the fyrd-færelde; the bryge-geweorc; and the weal, or fæsten-geweorc.

THE fyrd-færelde was the military service to which all the Saxon lands appear to have been subject, excepting those which the king, with the consent of his witena, or sometimes the king alone, expressly exempted from the obligation. This military service consisted in providing a certain number of armed men, proportioned to the rated quantity of land, who were to attend the king or his officers on expeditions made for the public safety, or against invading enemies. What number of men a given quantity of land was to furnish, cannot now be precisely stated; though it would seem, from Domesday-

Heming. Chart. p. 109.

book, that five hides found one soldier in most counties. C H A P. In the year 821 a grant of various lands was made, with the specified condition, that the owner should attend the public expedition with twelve vassals and as many shields. Even church lands were not exempt from this general obligation of military service. We find a person mentioned as a witness, who was "the leader of the army of the same bishop to the king's service." Egelwin, prior of a monastery, gave to a miles the villa of Crohlea for life, on the condition that he should serve for the monastery in the expeditions by sea and

THERE are many grants of lands to monasteries in which the military service is expressly reserved. It is almost always spoken of as a general, known, and established thing. It is mentioned in Domesday-book, of the burgh of Lideford, in Devonshire, that when an expedition is on foot, either by land or sea, the burgh has to render the same amount of service as should be required from Totness.

Or Totness it is said, that when expeditions are enjoined, as much service is to be rendered from Totness, Barnstaple, and Lideford, as from Exeter; and Exeter was to serve as for five hides of land.⁵ The laws of Ethelred provided that for every plough two men, well horsed, should be furnished.⁶

It is from Domesday-book that we may collect the most precise information on this curious topic. It is said of Berkshire, that, " if the king should send an army any where, only one soldier should go for five hides; and for his victuals and pay, every hide was to give him

land 4

³ MS. Claud. C. 9. p. 104. ³ Heming. Chart. p. 81.

⁴ Ibid. p. 265. 5 Domesday-book, con. Devenscire.

⁶ Wilk. Leg. p. 59.

CHAP. four shillings for two months. This money was not to be sent to the king, but to be given to the soldiers."

> OF the city of Oxford it is said, that when the king should go on an expedition, twenty burghers should go with him for all the others, or that twenty pounds should be paid, that all might be free.8

> This curious article shows, that the military service might be commuted by a pecuniary mulct.

> In Worcestershire it is declared, that "when the king goes against the enemy, if any one, after summoned by his mandate, should remain, he should (if he was a freeman having his sac, and able to go where he pleased) forfeit all his land at the pleasure of the king." But if he was a freeman under another lord, his lord should carry another man for him, and the offender should pay his lord forty shillings. But if no one at all went for him, he was to pay his lord that sum, who was to be answerable for as much to the king.9

> On these expeditions it was the privilege of the men serving for Herefordshire, that they should form the advanced guard in the progress, and the rear guard in a retreat. 10

> FROM Leicester twelve burghers were to go with the king when he went with an army by land. If the expedition was maritime, they were to send him four horses from the same burg, as far as London, to carry their arms and necessaries. 11

> THE custom of Warwick was, that ten burghers should go on the expedition for the rest. Whoever did not go after his summons, forfeited to the king one hundred shillings. When the king went by sea against

⁷ Domesday-book, con. Berockescire.

³ Ibid. Oxenefordscire, ⁹ Ibid. Wirecestrescire.

¹⁰ Ibid. com. Herefordscire. 11 Ibid. Ledecestrescire.

his enemies, this burg was to send him four batsueins, CHAP. or four pounds of pennies.12

THE fyrde, or expedition, is mentioned so early as in the laws of Ina. If a sith-cund man owning land abstained from the fyrde, he was to pay one hundred and twenty shillings, and lose his land. If he were not a land-owner, he was to pay sixty shillings, and a ceorl sixty shillings, for the fyrde mulct. 13 In the laws of Ethelred the fyrde is ordered to take place as often as there be need, and the scyp-fyrdrunga, or naval expedition, was directed to be so diligently prepared as to be ready every year soon after Easter. It is added, that if any depart from the fyrde where the king himself is, both his life and goods should be the forfeit; if he, in any other case quitted it, he was fined one hundred and twenty shillings. 14

In one of the grants it is mentioned, that a land-owner had lost his rus of ten cassatos, because he had rebelled with the king's soldiers in his expedition, and had committed much rapine and other crimes. 15

THE other two great services to which land was generally liable were, the construction or reparation of bridges and fortresses or walls. These are enjoined to be done in almost every grant. In Domesday-book it is said of Chester, that the prepositus should cause one man for every hide to come to rebuild the wall and bridge of the city; or if the man should fail to come, his lord was to pay forty shillings. 16

Besides these three great services, which later writers have called the trinoda necessitas, there were many other

14 Ibid. p. 109.

¹² Domesday-book, Warwicscire.

¹³ Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 23.

¹⁵ MS. Claud. C. 9. p. 132.

¹⁶ Domesday, Cestrescire.

C H A P. burdens to which the landed interest was more or less III. liable in the hands of the sub-proprietors.

A CAREFUL provision is made in many grants against royal tributes and impositions, and those of the great and powerful. In one it is mentioned, that the king should not require his pasture, nor the entertainment of those men called Fæsting-men, nor of those who carry hawks, falcons, horses, or dogs. ¹⁷ In another it is agreed, that the wood should not be cut for the buildings, of either king or prince. ¹⁸ It is elsewhere expressed, that the land should be free from the pasture and refection of those men called in Saxon Walhfæreld, and their feasting, and of all Englishmen or foreigners, noble and ignoble. ¹⁹ This burden of being compelled to entertain others, is mentioned in several grants. In one, the pasture of the king's horses and grooms ²⁰, and of his swine, which was called fearn leswe ²¹, is noticed.

It is probable that these royal impositions attached only to the lands which were or had been of the royal demesne. The pecuniary payments which resulted to the king from the landed estates in England are enumerated in Domesday-book.

When the original proprietors aliened or demised their lands to others, they annexed a variety of conditions to their grants, which subsequent transfers either repeated or discharged. Some of these may be stated. One contract was, that the person to whom the land was given should plough, sow, reap, and gather in the harvest of two acres of it, for the use of the ²² church. Another was, that the tenant should go with all his craft twice a year, once to plough, and at the other time to reap, for the grantors. ²³ Another grant reserves two

¹⁷ MS. Claud. C. 9. p. 104. Thorpe, R. R. 22.

¹⁸ MS. Claud.

¹⁹ Heming. Chart. 31.

²⁰ Ibid. 58.

²¹ Ibid. 86.

³³ Heming Chart. 134.

²³ Ibid. 189.

bushels of pure grain. Another, the right of feeding CHAP. one hundred swine. Another exacts the ploughing and reaping of a field.14 In others a ship, in others lead is reserved.25 Offa gave the land of twenty manentium to the church at Worcester, on the terms of receiving a specified gafol from the produce of the land.26 The services and customs attached to the possession of burghs. houses, and lands, which are mentioned in the Domesday Survey, may be consulted as giving much illustration to this topic. Sometimes an imposition was made on the land of a province by general consent. Thus, for building Saint Edmund's church, four denarii were put annually on every carucata of earth, by the consent of the landholders. 27 There were also ecclesiastical duties attached to land.

It is said by Lord Coke, that the first kings of this realm had all the lands of England in demesne, and that they reserved to themselves the grand manors and royalties, and enfeoffed the barons of the realm with the remainder, for the defence of the realm, with such jurisdiction as the courts baron now have, and instituted the freeholders to be judges of the court baron. 28 Much of this statement may be true; but it can be only made inferentially, for no positive information has descended to modern times of what lands the Saxon chieftains possessed themselves, nor how they disposed of them. We may recollect, that, according to the laws of the Britons in Wales, in the ninth century, all the land of the kingdom

³⁴ Ibid. 144. p. 174. 208. I quote Hearne's edition of this book; but cannot avoid saying, that the Saxon passages are badly printed. Either the transcript was made, or the press set and corrected, by a person ignorant of Saxon.

²⁵ Dugdale, Mon. i. p. 19, 20. 141.

²⁷ Ibid. p. 291. 36 Ibid. 101.

²⁸ Coke on Littleton, 58.

C H A P.

was declared to belong to the king ²⁹; and we may safely believe that the same law prevailed while the Britons occupied the whole island.

It is highly probable that the Saxon war-cyning succeeded to all the rights of the monarch he dispossessed; and, in rewarding his companions and warriors with the division of the spoil, it can be as little doubted, that from those to whom the cyning or the witena gave the lands of the British landholders, a certain portion of military service was exacted, in order to maintain the conquest they had achieved. This was indispensable, as nearly a century elapsed before the struggle was completely terminated between the Britons and the invaders. It was also a law among the Britons, that all should be compelled to build castles when the king pleased.30 But that the lands in the hands of the Anglo-Saxon proprietors were subject to the fyrd, as a general and inevitable burden, and that this military service was rigorously exacted, and its neglect severely punished, and was to be performed when called for by the king, the facts already adduced have abundantly proved. Enough has been also said to show that custom, or the will of individuals, had imposed on many estates personal services, pecuniary rents, and other troublesome exactions. Hence there can be no doubt, that the most essential part of what has been called the feudal system actually prevailed among the Anglo-Saxons. The term vassals was also used by them. Asser, the friend of Alfred, has the expression, nobilibus vassalis 31; and grants of kings to their vassals are not unfrequent.

THE Anglo-Saxon proprietors of land in demesne were, in many respects, the little sovereigns of their territories, from the legal privileges which, according to

²⁹ Leges Wallicæ Hoel, chap. 337. ³⁰ Ibid. p. 165.

³¹ Asser. Vit. Alfredi, p. 33.

the grants, and to the customs of the times, they pos- CHAP. sessed and were entitled to exercise. Their privileges consisted of their civil and criminal jurisdictions, their pecuniary profits and gafols, and their power over the servile part of their tenantry and domestics.

It is an appendage to many grants of land, that the possessors should have the sac and soc, or a certain extent of civil and criminal jurisdiction. Thus Edward the Confessor gave to the abbot of Abbendon sace and socne, toll and team, infangenetheof binnan burgan, and butan burgan; ham soone, grithbrice and 32 foresteal. Similar privileges are given, with many additions, in various grants, and they conveyed, not only the right of holding courts within the limits of the estate, to determine the causes and offences arising within it, but also the fines and payments, or part of them, with which the crimes were punished. In some grants these fines were shared with the king.³³ Sometimes the liberty of holding markets, and of receiving toll, is allowed, and sometimes an exemption from toll. There seems to be no doubt that the Anglo-Saxons took lands by inheritance. The peculiar modes of inheritance, called gavelkind, where all the children inherited; and borough-english, where the youngest son was the heir; have been referred to the Saxon times.

³² MS. Claud. C.9. p. 130.

³³ Ibid. p. 104.

CHAP, IV.

Their Conveyances.

CHAP. VX/E have several of their grants of land without any pecuniary consideration; of their conveyances on purchase; of their deeds of exchange; their testamentary devises, and their leases. These are all short and simple - as short and as simple as they might always be made if the ingenuity of mankind were less directed to evade their legal contracts by critical discussions of their construction.

> THE Saxon conveyances consisted principally of these things:

> 1st, The grantor's name and title are stated. In the older charters the description is very simple. It is more full in those of a later period; but the grants of Edgar are generally distinguished from those of other kings, by a pompous and inflated commencement.

> 2d, A recital is usually inserted, in many instances preceding the donor's name. Sometimes it states his title, or some circumstance connected with it. Sometimes the recital is on the brevity and uncertainty of life, and on the utility of committing deeds to writing -sometimes of the charitable or friendly feelings which occasioned the grant; and one recital states that the former land-boc, or conveyance, had been destroyed by fire, and that the owner had applied for new ones.

> 3d, The conveying words follow, which are usually "Do et concedo; donare decrevimus; concedimus et donamus; dabo; trado;" or other terms of equivalent import, either of Latin or Saxon.

Ath, The person's name then occurs to whom the CHAP. land is granted. The name is sometimes given without any addition, and sometimes the quality or parentage is simply mentioned, as Eadredo, Liaban fili Birgwines; meo fideli ministro Æthelwezde; Æthelnotho præfecto meo; Ealdberhto ministro meo, atque Selethrythe sorori tuæ, &c.

5th, What lawyers call the consideration of a deed is commonly inserted. This is sometimes pro intimo caritatis affectu, pro ejus humili obedientia, pro redemptione animæ meæ, and such like. • Often it is for money paid, or a valuable consideration.

6th, Another circumstance frequently mentioned in the royal grants is, that it was done with the consent of the witena or nobles.

7th, The premises are then mentioned. They are described shortly in the body of the grant by their measured or estimated quantity of land, and the name of the place where they were situate. Some general words then follow, often very like those annexed to the description of premises in our modern conveyances. The grants show that the land of the country was in a state of cultivated divisions, and was known by its divisional appellations. Sometimes the name given to it is expressed to be that by which it was locally known among the inhabitants of the district. At others the name is expressed to be its ancient or well-known denomination. The appellation, however, is usually Saxon; though in some few places it is obviously British.

When estates were large, they comprehended many pieces of land, of various descriptions. With the arable land, meadow, marsh, wood, and fisheries, were often intended to be passed. In our times, lest the words expressly used to indicate the land conveyed should not include all the property included in the purchase, words

CHAP. of large and general import are added, without any specific idea that such things are actually attached. Such expressions occur in the Saxon charters. Thus, in a grant dated in 679, after the land is mentioned, we have " with all things pertaining to it; fields, meadows, marshes, woods, fens, and all fisheries to the same land belonging." In the Anglo-Saxon grants of a more recent date, the general words are nearly as numerous as in our present deeds.

> BESIDES the first description of the place, and the general words, there are commonly added, at the end of the grant, the particular boundaries of the land. The grants are, for the most part, in Latin, and the boundaries in Saxon.

> 8th, The nature of the tenure is then subjoined, whether for life or lives, or in perpetuity, or whether any reversion is to ensue.

> 9th. The services from which the land is liberated. and those to which it is to continue subject, are then expressed.

> 10th, Some exhortations are then inserted to others, not to disturb the donation, and some imprecations on those who attempt such disturbance.

> 11th, The date, the place of signature if a royal grant, and the witnesses, usually conclude it. The date is sometimes in the beginning.

> Ir may be here remarked, that the Saxon deeds had no wax seals. These were introduced by the Norman conquest.3

> Tur divisions of land mentioned in the Saxon charters are marked and distinguished by precise boundaries. We will mention some of them, as they will show, very satisfactorily, the agricultural state of the country. They the thirty Az might are min expressed aparameters and

¹ Ingulf, p. 70. 3 Gale, 409.

sometimes occur concisely in Latin; but it was far more CHAP. usual to express them in Saxon, even in Latin charters. This was perhaps that they might be more generally and exactly known, and, in case of dispute, easier proved. The juries, gemots, and witnesses of the day, might mistake a Latin description, but not a vernacular

In 866 the boundaries of two manentes run thus: " From Sture on the Honey-brook, up behind the brook on the old hedge; along the hedge on the old way: along the way on the great street; along the street on four boundaries, then so to Calcbrook, along the brook; then so to Horsebrook, along the brook; then so to the ditch, along the ditch to the Sture again; on Sture to the ditch that is called Thredestreo, along the ditch on Heasecan-hill; from Heasecan-hill to the ditch, along the ditch to Wenforth, along Wenforth, then again on the Sture."

" FIRST the Icenan at Brom-bridge, up and along the way to Hlide-gate; thence along the valley to Beamstead; then by the hedge to Searnegles-ford; then up by Swetheling to Sow-brook; then forth by the boundary to Culesfield, forth by the right measured to the Steedlea, so to the Kids-field; then to the boundary valley, so to the Tæppe-lea; so on to Sheep-lea, then to Broadbramble, so to the old Gibbet-place, then on to the deep dell; then by the wooden boundary mark to Backgate; thence by the mark to the old fold; thence north and east to the military path, and by the military path to the Stocks of the high ford, so by the mere of the Hidestream to Icenan; then up by the stream and so to the east of Wordige; thence by the right mark to the thorn of the mere; thence to the red cross, so on by the Eal-

Smith's App. Bede; 770.

CHAP, derman's mark; from the mark then it cometh to Icenan up by the stream to the ford of Alders; thence to Kidburn, up and along the burn to the military path, so to the Turngate within the fish water to Sheepswick; then by the right mere to the Elderford, so to the Broadvalley, then to the Milk-valley, so to the Meal-hill, and along the way to the mark of the Forester's, south of the boundary to the hay-meadow, then to Cleanfield, so on Copper-valley, forth by the hedge on the angle field: then forth on the Icenan north of Steneford, so with the stream till it cometh again on Brombridge." 3

> "THESE are the boundaries of the land to Cerotesege (Chertsey), and to Thorpe: That is, first on the Waymouth up and along the way to Way-bridge; from Way-bridge within the eel mill ditch; midward from the ditch to the old military street, and along the street on Woburn-bridge, and along the burn on the great willow; from the great willow along the lake on the pool above Crocford; from the head of this pool right to the elder; from the elder right on the military street; along the street to Curten-staple; from Curten-staple along the street to the hoar-thorn; from the thorn to the oak tree; from the oak tree to the three hills; from the three hills to the Sihtran; from the sihtran to the limitary brook; from the limitary brook to Exlæpesburn; from Exlæpesburn to the hoar maple; from the hoar maple to the three trees; from the three trees along the deep brook right to the Wallgate; from the Wallgate to the clear pool; from the clear pool to the foul brook; from the foul brook to the black willow; from the black willow right to the Wallgate, and along the Thames to the other part of Mixten-ham in the water

³ Dugd. Mon. 37.

between the hill island and Mixten-ham, and along CHAP. the water to Nettle-island; from that island and along the Thames about Oxlake to Bere-hill, and so forth along the Thames to Hamen-island; and so along the middle of the stream to the mouth of the Way." 4

In 743 these boundaries occur: "First from Turcan Spring's head and along the street on Cynelms-stone on the mill-way, then and along the ridge on Hart-ford; thence and along the streams on the city ford on the fosse on the speaking place; thence on Turcan-valley on the seven springs, midward of the springs to Bale's-hill, south, then on the chalk-wall; thence again on Turcanvalley, and along again on the Turcan Spring's head." 5

"First from Thames mouth and along the Thames" in Wynnabæce's mouth; from Wynnabæce to Woodymoor; from Woodymoor to the wet ditch; from the wet ditch to the beach, and from the beach to the old dike; from the old dike to the sedge-moor; from the sedge-moor to the head of the pool, and along to Thornbridge; from Thorn-bridge to Kadera-pool; from Kadera-pool to Beka-bridge; from Beka-bridge to the forepart of the Hipes-moor; from that moor within Coforth-brook; from the brook within the hedge; after the hedge to the hillock called Kett; from Kett to the barrows; from the barrows to Lawern; from Lawern into the ditch; and after the ditch to the Ship-oak; and from the Ship-oak to the great aspen, and so in to the reedy slough; from the slough within the barrows; from the barrows to the way of the five oaks, and after that way within the five oaks; from the oaks to the three boundaries; from the three boundaries to the bourn of the lake; from that bourn to the mile-stone; from that

⁴ Dugd. Mon. 76.

⁵ Heming. Chart. 57.

'C H A P. stone to the hoar apple-tree; from that apple-tree within Doferie; after Doferie to Severn, and along the Severn to the Thames mouth," 6

In one of the boundaries a wolf-pit occurs.7

CHAP. V.

Some Particulars of the Names of Places in MIDDLESEX and LONDON, in the SAXON Times.

CHAP. TT appears from Domesday-book, that in the Saxon times the county of Middlesex had been divided into hundreds, which were distinguished by the names that they now bear, with small variations of pronunciation or orthography.

> Domesday Names for the Hundreds of Middlesex.

Modern Names

Osuluestone, Gara, Helethorne. Spelethorne, Adelmetone. Honeslaw.

Ossulston. Gore. Elthorne. Spelthorne. Edmonton. Hounslow.

Among the places mentioned in the county in Domesday-book, we may easily discern the following ancient and modern names to correspond: -

Holeburne. Holborn. Stibenhede. Stepney. Fulcham. Fulham. Tueverde. Twyford. Wellesdone. Wilsdon.

⁶ Heming. Chart. 75.

Totehele, Scepertone, Hochestone, Neutone, Pancrass, Draitone, Hamestede, Stanes, Sunneberie.

Greneforde.

Hanewelle.

Covelie.

Handone, Hermodeswarde,

Tiburne. Haneworde, Hardintone. Hillendone. Ticheham. Leleham. Exeforde. Bedefunt, Felteham. Stanmere, Northala. Adelmetone. Eneffelde, Rislepe, Chingesberie, Stanwelle, Hamntone. Hergotestane, Cranforde,

Toteham,

Chelched.

Chenesita,

Tseldone.

Tothil.

Shepperton.
Hoxton.
Newington.
Pancras.
Drayton.

Pancras.
Drayton.
Hampstead.
Staines.
Sunbury.
Greenford.
Hanwell.
Cowley.
Hendon.

Harmondsworth.

Tyburn. Hanworth. Harlington. Hillingdon. Twickenham. Laleham. Uxbridge. Bedfont. Feltham. Stanmore. Northall. Edmonton. Enfield. Ruislip. Kingsbury. Stanwell. Hampton. Hestone. Cranford. Chelsea.

Islington, otherwise Isledon, or the Isel Hill.

Tottenham. Hayes.

Kensington.

CHAP.



CHAP. THE local denominations by which the various places in England are now known seem to have been principally imposed by our Anglo-Saxon ancestors. Most of them, in their composition, betray their Saxon origin; and whoever will take the trouble to compare the names in Domesday-book, which prevailed in the island during the time of the Confessor, with the present appellations of the same places, will find that the greatest number of them correspond. The hundreds in the county of Sussex were sixty-three, and still remain so: of these, thirty-eight bore the same names as now: and of the villæ or maneria, which are about three hundred and forty-five, there are two hundred and thirty with appellations like their present.

> LONDON is mentioned in Bede as the metropolis of the East Saxons in the year 604, lying on the banks of the Thames, "the emporium of many people coming by sea and land."

> In a grant, dated 889, a court in London is conveyed " at the ancient stony edifice called by the citizens hwæt mundes stone, from the public street to the wall of the same city." 2 From this we learn that so early as 889 the walls of London existed.

> In 857 we find a conveyance of a place in London called Ceolmundinge haga, not far from the West Gate. 3 This West Gate may have been either Temple Bar or Holborn Bars.

> ETHELBALD, the Mercian king, gave a court in London, between two streets called Tiddberti-street and Savin-street. 4

> SNORRE, the Icelander, mentions the battle in Southwark in the time of Ethelred II. He says the Danes took London. On the other side of the Thames was a

² Heming. 42. * Bede, l. 2. c. 3. 3 Hem. 44.

⁴ Dugd. Mon. 138.

great market, called Sudrvirki (Southwark), which the CHAP. Danes fortified with many defences; with a high and broad ditch, and a rampart of stone, wood, and turf. The English under Ethelred attacked these in vain.

THE bridge between the city and Southwark was broad enough for two vehicles to pass together. On the sides of the bridge, fortifications and breast-works were erected fronting the river. The bridge was sustained by piles fixed in the bed of the river. Olave. the ally of Ethelred, assailed the bridge, and succeeded in forcing it. 5

ETHELBALD grants the vectigal, or custom, paid by one ship in the port of London to the church of Rochester. 6

CHAP. VI.

Lawsuits about Land.

WE have some account of their legal disputes about CHAP. landed property in some of their documents, from which we will select a few particulars.

ONE charter states that Wynfleth led her witnesses before the king. An archbishop, a bishop, an ealdorman, and the king's mother, were there. They were all to witness that Alfrith had given her the land. The king sent the writ by the archbishop, and by those who had witnessed it, to Leofwin, and desired that men should be assembled to the shire-gemot. The king then

⁵ Snorre, excerpted in Johnstone's Celto-Scand. p. 89, 92,

⁶ Thorpe, Reg. Roff. 14.

CHAP, sent his seal to this gemot by an abbot, and greeted all the witan there. Two bishops, an abbot, and all the shire were there. The king commanded to be done that which was thought to be most right. The archbishop sent his testimony, and the bishop; they told her she must claim the land for herself. Then she claimed her possessions, with the aid of the king's mother. An abbot, a priest, an etheling, eight men, two abbesses, six other ladies, and many other good thegas and women were there. She obtained her suit. "

> In another transaction, a bishop paid fifteen pounds, for two hides, to Lefsius and his wife at Cambridge. Ten pounds of the money were paid before several witnesses. A day was appointed for the other five pounds. They made another convention between them, which was, that Lessius and his wife should give the fifteen pounds for the five hides at Cleie, with the condition that the bishop should give, besides, a silver cup of forty shillings which the father of Lefsius, on his death-bed, bequeathed to the bishop. This agreement being made, they exchanged all the live and dead stock on the two lands. But before they had returned to the bishop those ten pounds at Cleie, king Edgar died. On his death Lefsius and his wife attempted to annul their agreement with the bishop, sometimes offered him the ten pounds which he had paid them, and sometimes denied that they owed any thing. Thus they thought to recover the land which they had sold; but the bishop overcame them with his witnesses. Presuming on success, Lefsius seized other lands. This violence occasioned these lands to remain two years without either plowing or sowing or any cultivation. At last a generale placitum was held at London, whither the duces, the princes, the satrapæ, the pleaders, and the lawyers,

MS. Cott. Aug. 2. p. 15.

flowed from every part. The bishop then impleaded CHAP. Lessius, and before all expounded his cause, and the injury he had sustained.

This affair being well and properly and openly discussed by all, they decreed that the lands which Lefsius had forcibly taken should be restored to the bishop, and that Lefsius should make good all the loss and the mund, and forfeit to the king his were for the violence. Eight days afterwards they met again at Northampton: all the country having assembled, they exposed the same cause again before all; and it was determined in the same manner in which it had been adjudged at London. Every one then with oath on the cross returned to the bishop the lands which had been violently torn from him.

Thus far the narration gives no account of the two and the five hides about which the controversy began. But it is immediately afterwards mentioned, that soon after Lessius died. On his death, the bishop and the ealderman and the primates of Northamptonshire, and the proceses of East Anglia, had a placitum at Walmesford in eight hundreds. It was there determined, among other things, that the widow of Lefsius and his heirs ought to compensate for the above-mentioned violence, as he ought to have done if he had lived; and they appreciated the injury which the bishop had sustained at one hundred pounds. The aforesaid matron, supported with the good wishes of all the optimates, humbly requested the bishop to have mercy on her, and that she might commute her were, and that of her sons, for one hundred shillings, which the bishop was about to give her for the two hides at Dunham. The bishop was more benevolent to her than she expected; for he not only remitted to her the money in which she had been condemned, but paid her the hundred shillings

CHAP, which she had proposed to relinquish. He also gave her seven pounds for the crop on the land at Dunham.

> A PIECE of water was leased at a rent of two thousand eels. The tenants unjustly possessed themselves of some land of the monastery, without the adjudication or legal permission of the citizens and the hundred. The ealderman came to Ely, and Begmund and others were called for this cause, and summoned to the placitum of the citizens and of the hundred several times, but never came. The abbot did not therefore desist, but renewed his claim at the placita within the city and without, and oftentimes made his complaint. At length the ealderman held at Cambridge a great placitum of the citizens and hundreds, before twenty-four judges, under Thorningefeld, near Maideneburge. The abbot related how Begmund and others had unjustly seized the land, and though often summoned to the placitum, would never come. Then they all adjudged that the abbot should have his land, pool, and fishery, and that Begmund and the others should pay their fish to the abbot for six years, and should give their forfeiture to the king. They also decreed that if this was not performed willingly, they should be justified in the seizure of the offender's property. The ealderman also commanded that Oschetel, Oswy, of Becce, and Godere of Elv. should go round the land, lead the abbot over it, and do all this, which was performed accordingly. 3

> In another dispute, on the non-performance of an agreement for the sale of land, the ealderman commanded the defendant to be summoned, and, going to Dittune, began there to narrate the causes and complaints, the agreements and their violation, by the testimony of many legal men. The defendant denied the

^{*} Hist. Eli. 3 Gale, 468. 469.

whole. They ordered him to purge himself by the requisite oath; but as neither he nor they, who ought to have sworn with him, could do this, the cause was adjudged against him, and this judgment was afterwards confirmed at Cambridge.

As many curious particulars of their legal customs appear in these narrations, we will add another.

WLSTAN forfeited some land, which the king had purchased and sold to a bishop. About this time a great gemot was appointed at Witlesford, of the ealderman and his brothers, and the bishop, and the widow of Wlstan, and all the better counsellors of the county of Cambridge. When they all had sat down, Wensius arose and claimed the land, and said that he and his relations had been unjustly deprived of the land, as he had received for it no consideration, neither in land or money. Having heard this plea, the ealderman asked, if there were any one present who knew how Wlstan had acquired that land. Alfric of Wicham answered, that Wlstan had bought that land of Wensius for eight pounds, and he appealed to the eight hundreds on the south side of Cambridge as witnesses. He said WIstan gave Wensius the eight pounds in two payments, the last of which he had sent by Leofwin, son of Adulf, who gave it to him in a purse, before the eight hundreds where the land lay. Having heard these things, they adjudged the land to the bishop, and they directed Wensius, or his relations, to look to the heirs of Wlstan if he wanted more money for his land. 5

⁴ Hist, Eli. 3 Gale, p. 484.

CHAP. VII.

Their Denominations of Land.

CHAP. VII.

IN the charters we find various names for the quantities of land conveyed. These are, hidæ, cassati, mansæ, manentes, aratrum, sulunga.

THE cassati, mansæ, the manentes, the aratrum, and the sulunga, appear to have expressed the same meaning which the word hide signified.

THAT the cassati and the mansæ were the same, appears from several grants; thus, ten mansas are in another part of the same grants called ten cassatos ; and thirty mansas, thirty cassatos. So ten cassatos, when mentioned again, are styled ten mansos or mansas.3

In other grants, hides are stated as synonymous with cassatos. Thus, ten cassatos are, in the same grant, called ten hides4, and twenty cassatos twenty hides. 5 In other grants, the land, which, in the first part of the document, is enumerated as hides, is afterwards termed cassatos. Thus, fifty hides, fifty cassatos 6; seven hides, seven cassatos 7; five hides, five cassatos.8

THE grants also identify the expressions mansæ and mansi with hide. A charter of 947 conveys twenty mansæ, "quod anglice dicitur twenty hides." 9 In an-

² Cotton MS. Claud. C. 9, p. 195.

³ Ibid. p. 131, 132.

⁵ Ibid. p. 102. 194.

⁷ Ibid. p. 121.

⁹ Ibid. Claud. B. 6. p. 37.

² Ibid. p. 119. 195.

⁴ Ibid. C. 9.

⁶ Ibid. p. 118.

⁸ Ibid. p. 130:

other, seven hides are also called seven mansæ. 10 One C H A P. mansa is one hide 11, and five mansæ five hides. 13

In one grant, the expressions fourteen mansiunculæ, and forty jugeribus, are identified with fourteen hides and forty acres. 13

ALL these authorities prove, that the hide, the cassatus, and the mansa, were similar designations of land.

In one ancient MS. there is a note in the margin, in the same hand-writing with the body, thus, "No. qd. hide cassati et manse idem sunt." 14

OTHER grants identify the sulunga with the preceding. Thus, one conveys sex mansas quod Cantigenæ dicunt sex sulunga. ¹⁵ Another mentions the land of three aratrorum as three sulong. ¹⁶ Another says twelve mansas "quod Cantigenæ dicunt twelf sulunga." ¹⁷ Two cassati are also called two sulunga. ¹⁸

The hide seems to have contained one hundred and twenty acres. In one historical narration of ancient grants, an hide is so defined: " unam hydam per sexies viginti acras 19;" two hides are afterwards mentioned as twelve times twenty arable acres. 20

In Domesday-book we find hides and carucatæ mentioned. 21 Carucata implies so much land as a single plough could work during a year. 22 This ancient sur-

¹⁰ Cotton MS. Claud. C. 9. p. 130.

¹² Heming. Chart. p. 150. ¹² Ibid. p. 143. 182, 183.

¹³ MS. Claud. B. 6. p. 75. ¹⁴ Ibid. C. 9. p. 113.

¹⁵ MS. Chart. of the late Mr. Astle, No. 23.

²⁶ Ibid. No. 7.

¹⁷ Ibid. No. 24. and Thorpe, Reg. Roff. 189.

¹⁹ MS. Chart. Aug. 2. p. 68. ¹⁹ 3 Gale, Script. p. 472.

²⁰ Ibid. p. 475. 481.

²² The word is usually abbreviated. In p. 77. and some other places, it occurs at full length.

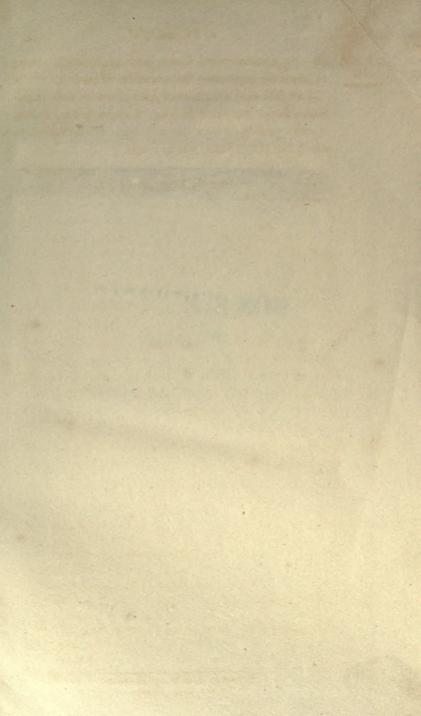
³³ See Du Cange, Gloss. Med. Lat. 1. p. 859.

CHAP, vey also contains acres, leucæ, and quarantenæ, among its terms for expressing the quantities of land.

> THE following measures of land occur in the Anglo-Saxon laws: 3 mila, 3 furlong, 3 æcera bræde, 9 fota, 9 scefta munda, 9 bere corna 13, express the extent to which the king's peace was to reach.

THE END.

²³ Wilkins, Leges Sax. p. 63.



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